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# The NEIGHBORHOOD

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## A History of Skinker de Balivière



Mrs. Jean Pierre Cabanné [Julie Gratiot] and grand-children

Mary Virginia Kingsbury (Countess A. Robert de Giverville)

Adèle Louise Kingsbury (Mrs. A. M. Waterman)

Jules Cabanné Kingsbury.

Kathleen M.  
HARLEMAN

Georgiana B.  
STUART

Susan K.  
TEPAS



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DEDICATED TO ALL OUR NEIGHBORS OF THE  
SKINKER-DEBALIVIERE NEIGHBORHOOD:  
THE REASON WE LIVE HERE AND LIKE IT

# THE NEIGHBORHOOD

A History of Skinker-DeBaliviere

by

Kathleen M. Harleman  
Georgiana B. Stuart  
Susan K. Tepas

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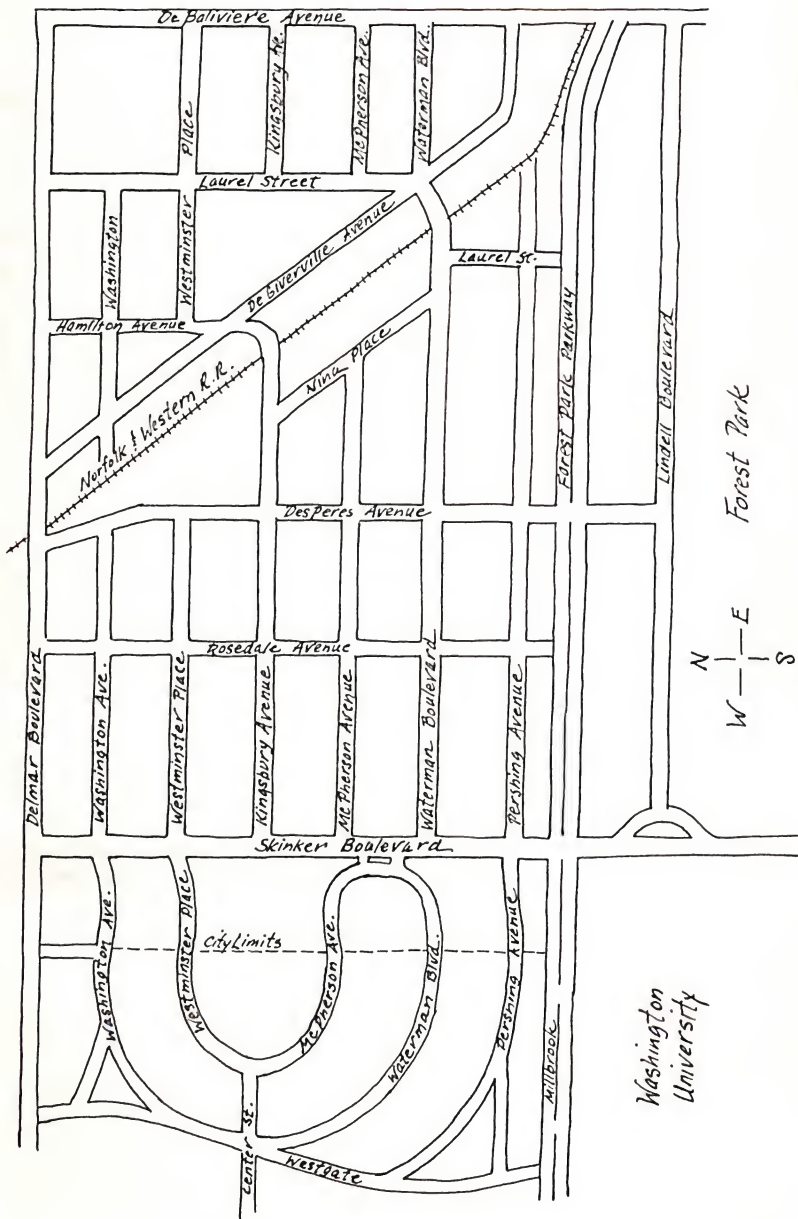
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# The Skinner-DeBaliviere Neighborhood



Washington University



SKINKER-DEBALIVIERE COMMUNITY COUNCIL, INC.

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## FOREWORD

For many years residents of the Skinker-DeBaliviere Neighborhood have heard that this area was once part of the old Kingsbury Farm. A chance remark by Richard C. Hart, a lifetime resident, that 1973 was the 100th anniversary of the subdividing of the Kingsbury Farm whetted our curiosity and finally led to this effort. Dick Hart provided us with a copy of the original deed of the subdivision.

When we began, we found very little factual information readily available. We had heard many rumors, stories and anecdotes about the neighborhood, but felt it necessary to establish sound factual data in order to separate fact from fiction. So, we began digging and digging and digging. We are not historians, and we offer the results of our research in the hope that residents and friends may find it interesting. Perhaps others will be stimulated to add additional information and research, anecdotes and facts. These may be directed to us at the Skinker-DeBaliviere Community Council office whose address and phone number are on p. 3.

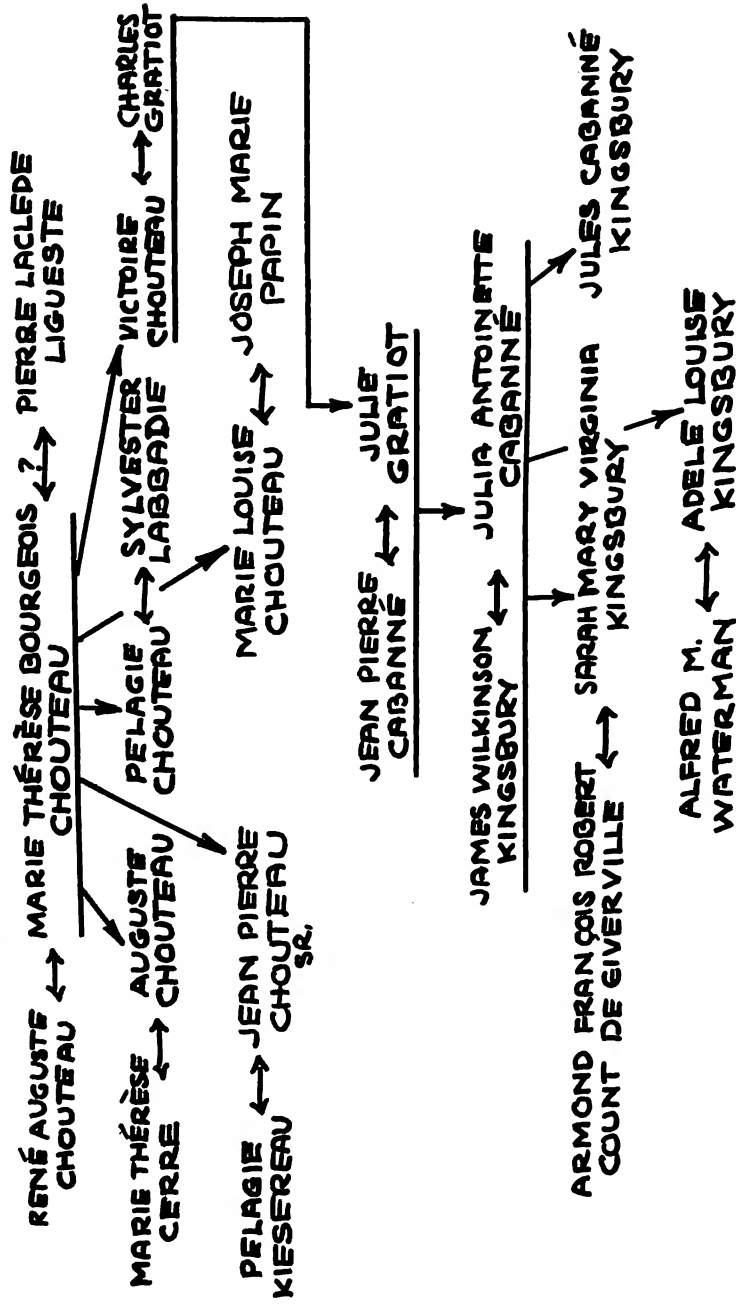
Without the help of the following people, this history would not be possible:

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\*The picture on the cover was found between the pages of Beatrice Turner's  
The Chouteau Family.

# THE KINGSBURY GENEALOGY



## THE EARLIEST OWNERS OF OUR LAND

The area now known as the Skinker-DeBaliviere Neighborhood has a history of owners with well-known St. Louis names. From the original land grant in 1789 until the 20th century, the ground was involved in many confusing real estate transactions. All of it was once a portion of the land owned by Marie Louise Chouteau Papin (sister of one of the founders of St. Louis), and by 1834 had become divided into three principal sections.

Our research concerned itself with one section, the one bounded by DeBaliviere Avenue and the Parkview Subdivision on the east and west, by the northern side of Forest Park Parkway on the south and the southern side of Kingsbury Avenue on the north. We chose to concentrate on this section because it was once part of the Kingsbury Farm; because the Kingsburys were descendants of the original owners, the Papins; because 1973 is the 100th anniversary of the subdividing of the Kingsbury Farm; and because many of the streets in our neighborhood carry the heritage of the names of the Kingsbury Family.

Our history begins not long after Auguste Chouteau and Pierre Laclède Liguette founded St. Louis on February 15, 1764. There are varied opinions as to whether or not Pierre Laclède and Marie Therese Bourgeois Chouteau, mother of Auguste Chouteau, lived as man and wife and whether or not he was the father of the four younger children of Madame Chouteau (Pierre, Pelagie, Marie Louise and Victoire). (6, pp. 23-24) What ever the truth, it did not detract from the respect and admiration the people of the village of St. Louis had for Madame Chouteau, known as "La mere de Saint Louis". (6, p. 209) Our history concerns itself with Marie Louise Chouteau Papin, fourth child of Madame Chouteau and sister of Auguste Chouteau. Marie Louise married Joseph Marie Papin in 1779.

In 1796, Madame Papin was granted a tract of land by the Acting French Lieutenant Governor of the Spanish Territory, Zenon Trudeau. (9, p. 1692) The land became known as Survey 378 and contained approximately 3,200 arpens or 2,720 acres. Generally its boundaries were Maple Avenue on the north, Art Hill in Forest Park on the south, Union Boulevard on the east and Hanley Road on the west. Madame Papin requested Lieutenant Governor Trudeau to give her a farm "on the banks of the River Des Peres, which her slaves might cultivate to provide food for her increasing family." (6, p. 255) Her husband, Joseph Papin, was born in Montreal in 1741 and educated in France. His father brought him to St. Louis where the elder Papin had bought some ground about the time that Laclède and Chouteau founded the village. When his father died in 1772, Joseph Marie received a large inheritance. He and his brother-in-law, Sylvester Labbadie (husband of Pelagie Chouteau, third child of Madame Chouteau), were involved in trading with the Indians. (1, p. 105) The business went moderately well for some years. Eventually, along with some minor problems, the loss of a sizeable cargo of furs prompted his decision to move to his farm, Survey 378. Up until the move to the farm on the River Des Peres, the Papin family home was on the corner of Main and Chestnut Streets, now a part of the Jefferson National Expansion Memorial. Papin sold this house to another brother-in-law, Charles Gratiot, who had married Victoire Chouteau (fifth child of Madame Chouteau). (9, pp. 1691-1692) Papin died in 1811 (9, p. 1692) and Madame Papin died in 1817. (15, p. 60)

Deeds found at The Recorder of Deeds of the City of St. Louis show that on August 29, 1808, three years before Joseph Marie's death, he and Marie Louise sold all of Survey 378 to their children, except one portion. This was sold to Pierre Chouteau, Sr. (brother of Madame Papin and second child of Madame Chouteau). (58, Book B, pp. 118, 120, 127, 128, 144, 145, 150, 156, 166, 167, 175, 187) These deeds are in French and the boundaries are given in terms of property owners. For instance, the land sold to Alexander Papin (third child of Joseph Marie and Marie Louise) is described as being bounded on the north by the land of Pierre Didier Papin, on the east by the land of Charles Gratiot, on the south by the land of Emilie Papin, and on the west by vacant land. By tracing deeds both forward and backward in time, we have determined that two of the sections of land in these 1808 transactions became the Kingsbury Farm. One section is that described above, owned by Alexander Papin. The other was directly south of Alexander's and was owned by Emilie Papin (eleventh child of Joseph Marie and Marie Louise).

Within eight years, John P. Cabanne (Alexander's and Emilie's cousin by marriage) owned the above two sections of land. In 1812, Alexander Papin sold his land to his uncle, Sylvester Labbadie, for \$400. (58, Book D, p. 61) Labbadie, in 1814, sold it to his nephew by marriage, John P. Cabanne, for \$400. (58, Book M, p. 260) Cabanne had married Julie Gratiot, daughter of Charles Gratiot and Victoire Chouteau. In 1816, Emilie Papin sold her tract of land to Cabanne. (58, Book E, p. 524)

John P. Cabanne was born in 1773, in Pau, France. Educated in France, he came to the United States in 1803, with quite a bit of money. He first lived in Charleston, South Carolina, then moved to New Orleans. In 1806, he came to St. Louis and went into the fur trade business with several men; two of these men were Pierre Chouteau, Jr. and Antoine Chenie (a son-in-law of Madame Papin). Apparently John Cabanne was civic-minded as well as wealthy. He was a member of the first Public School Board of St. Louis and one of the incorporators of the city. (9, p. 289)

On November 7, 1833, Cabanne sold the two tracts of land he had bought from the Papins to Pierre Chouteau, Jr., his business partner and brother-in-law. Chouteau had married Julie Gratiot Cabanne's sister Emilie. At this same time Cabanne also sold Pierre Chouteau a tract of land "allotted to John P. Cabanne on petition for partition between John Pierre Cabanne, Charles S. Hempstead and Joseph Klunk." (58, Book T, p. 192) Cabanne sold these three tracts of land to Chouteau for \$3,000, to hold in trust for his daughter Julia Cabanne Kingsbury.

On May 1, 1834, less than a year after Cabanne sold Chouteau the three tracts of land, Cabanne bought them back from Chouteau for the same price. (58, Book V, p. 386) The next day, May 2, 1834, Cabanne sold the land to his son-in-law James Wilkinson Kingsbury for \$3,000. (58, Book V, p. 387)

Captain James Wilkinson Kingsbury was born in Franklin, Connecticut in 1801. His father, Jacob Kingsbury, was in the Continental Army and was picked by the Marquis de Lafayette to march to Virginia for the southern campaign of the Revolutionary War. James

W.Kingsbury graduated from West Point in 1823. He was in command of the troops on the steamer Warrior during the Black Hawk War.(10, p.256) His military career brought him to St. Louis, an important military post in the 1830s. Army officers were frequently good friends with the leading families: "Officers of the army have a proverbial aptitude for choosing well among the ornaments of society of whom indeed they have the pick, and it is a compliment to the ladies that so many of them have wedded our officers."(12, p.315) Kingsbury chose one of the "ornaments of society" when he married Julia Antoinette Cabanne in 1830. Two years after he bought the land from Cabanne and the year his wife died, 1836, Kingsbury resigned his commission and became the keeper of the military stores in St. Louis.(10, p.256) When Julia died after only six years of marriage, James was left with three small children: Sarah Mary Virginia, age four; Adele Louise, age two; and Jules Cabanne, age one. Presumably, he resigned his army commission to provide a more stable home for his children.

Part of the story of James Kingsbury's family is tragic, for not only did his wife die young, but Jules was struck by lightning and killed in 1876. He was 32 years old and unmarried, so no male heir of this line remained to carry on the Kingsbury name. Mary Virginia's life seems to have been happier. She married Amoud Francois Robert, Count DeGiverville, in 1865. Count DeGiverville was born in 1823 in Normandy, France. He spent some time in the French navy and was independently wealthy after inheriting his father's estates.(14, p.315) After their marriage the Count and Countess lived both in France and St. Louis. Both died in St. Louis in 1889.

The happiness of Adele's life is questionable. She married Alfred Morgan Waterman in 1855. Waterman was born in Hartford, Connecticut in 1826. When he finished school he worked for E. D. Morgan and Co. in New York until 1848. He came to St. Louis and headed Waterman and Ryan, a wholesale grocery firm. In 1862 he moved to Warsaw, Illinois and directed the firm of Waterman and Wagley, which operated a distillery. Poor health caused him to retire from an active business life in 1864, when he moved back to New York. In 1867 he returned to St. Louis where he lived on the Kingsbury homestead on Union Avenue. He moved to 3327 Pine Street in 1885, and died there that same year. (9, p.2453) We assume Adele stayed in St. Louis or considered it her home during all of Alfred's moves. Deeds found for this period state that her residence was the County of St. Louis, though ten Waterman children were born between 1856 and 1870. These same deeds also state that Frederick A. Churchill is acting as trustee for Adele L. Waterman, and whenever Adele bought land, the deed states that the property is "for the sole and separate use and benefit of Adele L. Waterman apart from control of her husband."(58, Book 223, p.454) From the above facts, one could question the happiness of the Waterman marriage. When Adele died in St. Louis in 1898, only four of the ten Waterman children were living.

James Kingsbury died June 25, 1853. His will, dated June 10, 1853, begins, "In the name of God, Amen. I James W. Kingsbury of St. Louis, Missouri . . . being sick and feeble in body, but in full possession of my mind and affections . . ."(58, Book R, p.372) Because he was so ill, he was staying in the home of John B. Sarpy, his brother-in-law,

when his will was written. Executors of the will were John B. Sarpy; his brother T.H.C. Kingsbury of Franklin, Connecticut; and Robert Forsythe, his friend and neighbor. Sarpy was also named guardian of Kingsbury's two minor children, Adele and Jules. His tract of land consisted of 500 arpens or about 425 acres, and was bounded by what would now be, on the east Union Boulevard, on the south by the Forest Park Parkway, on the west by Hanley Road and on the north by Kingsbury Boulevard.

This tract of land (exclusive of the homestead of forty acres) I do not wish to go to my children nor to be devised among them until the end of twenty years from my death. And in the mean time I empower and direct my Executors at their discretion to rent or lease out the said land (exclusive of the homestead of forty acres) in convenient parcels so as to make an income for the better support and advancement of my children . . . . At the end of said term of twenty years the whole of said tract of land including the farm and homestead to go to my said children and their heirs in absolute property under the first article of this will. (58, Book R, p.372)

The real estate transactions involving the Kingsbury Farm during the twenty years following James Kingsbury's death are most confusing. An interesting deed, dated September 9, 1857, shows Alfred Waterman selling "all property wherever situated which belonged to the late John P. Cabanne or the late Julia G. Cabanne or the late James W. Kingsbury . . ." (58, Book 186, p.488) to Robert Forsythe for \$10,000. This could be why in future deeds Adele stated that her property is "apart from control of her husband." During these twenty years Jules Kingsbury sold part of the land to T.H.C. Kingsbury (58, Book 201, p.123) and Adele bought some back from him. (58, Book 230, p.28) Adele also bought back some of the land Alfred sold to Forsythe and gave it to Henry Waterman, Alfred's father, to hold for her. (58, Book 223, p.454) Henry sold the land back to Adele for \$5.00. (58, Book 246, p.119) By July 15, 1873, twenty years and twenty days after James Kingsbury's death, the whole of the farm was back in the hands of the two surviving Kingsbury children, Adele and Mary Virginia, and the Kingsbury Farm was subdivided.

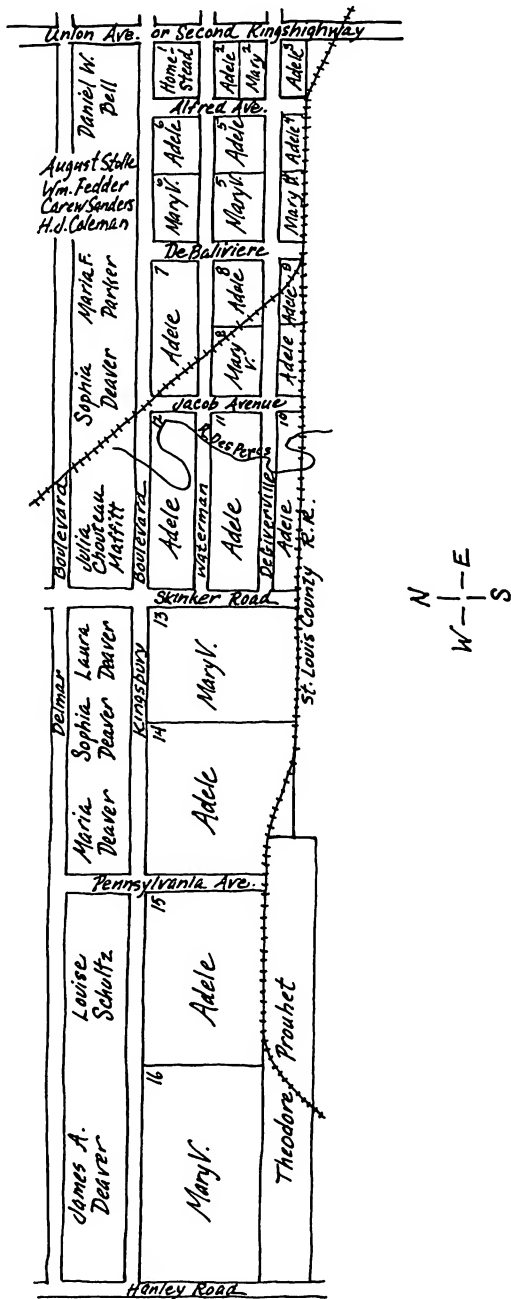
How the Kingsbury girls divided the land and laid out certain avenues and streets can best be seen by looking at a map which accompanied the deed, dated July 15, 1873 (see p. 11). The deed is a deed of partition "by and between Armond Francois Robert Compte de Giverville and Mary Virginia, Comtesse de Giverville, his wife of Eure, France . . . and Frederick A. Churchill, Trustee of Adele L. Kingsbury Waterman, wife of Alfred M. Waterman." After County Surveyor Julius Pitzman had surveyed and subdivided the Kingsbury Farm, the resulting subdivision was named Kingsbury Place. Not included in the subdivision were about eleven acres, the Kingsbury Homestead, bounded on the north by Kingsbury Boulevard, the east by Union Avenue, the south by Waterman Avenue and the west by Alfred Avenue (now Belt Avenue). (58, Book 490, p.137) Since the DeGiverilles lived mostly in France, the Watermans lived at the Homestead and it became known as the Waterman house.

When describing the area as it was in 1875, Gill states "along Union Avenue . . . the Watermans lived in a house with a square tower near the present street of that name." (6, p.123) Union Avenue at this time was considered way out in the country. The method



The subdividing of the Kingsbury Farm

Surveyed June, 1873, by Julius Pitzman



of transportation for people who lived out as far as the Watermans was a family surrey or the Narrow Gauge Railroad, a steam railroad which acquired its name because there was only a three foot gauge between the rails. It had small engines and cars to match the small gauge. The little railroad began at Grand and Olive and travelled to Florissant along what became the Hodiament streetcar line. From Grand and Olive to downtown, or downtown to Grand and Olive, passengers travelled by the Olive Street horse car. (6, p.257-258)

In contrast to this detailed information about the section of our area which was the Kingsbury Farm, we know little about the other two tracts which eventually became the Skinker-DeBaliviere Neighborhood. One of these sections we know little about was the property of Robert Forsythe and is part of what was and is known as the Catlin Tract. The boundaries of the Catlin Tract today are the northern boundary of Forest Park on the south, the north side of the Forest Park Parkway on the north, Union on the east and Skinker on the west. The section of the Catlin Tract with which we are concerned, that between DeBaliviere and Skinker, contains 60 acres and was leased from the Parkview Realty and Improvement Company in 1903 by the Louisiana Purchase Exposition Company. This is where the concession area or "The Pike" was located during the 1904 World's Fair. (28, p.35) There were no homes along this part of Lindell Boulevard, then called Lindell Drive.

The Catlin Tract was named for Daniel Catlin. Catlin took over his father's prosperous St. Louis tobacco business in 1859, incorporated it and became president in 1876. He sold it to the American Tobacco Company in 1898. His land in St. Louis was valued at \$2,356,430 in 1915. Although the Catlins had a prestigious address (21 Vandeventer Place), they were finishing a new home at 53 Westmoreland Place when he died in 1916, at the age of 79.(26) The Catlin house on Westmoreland was owned by Mayor and Mrs. Alphonso J. Cervantes during the 1960s.(4, p.171)

Another section we know little about can today be outlined by DeBaliviere and the Parkview Subdivision on the east and west, respectively, by the southern side of Delmar Boulevard on the north and the northern side of Kingsbury Avenue on the south. This section was once part of the land known as the Deaver tract. Larkin Deaver, in 1842, was a clothing merchant; his business was located at Vine and First and his residence was on Olive between Fifth and Sixth streets.(11, p.33) On August 14, 1832, he married Francis Papin, daughter of Alexander Papin and granddaughter of Marie Louise Chouteau Papin.(20) A plat with the deed showing the subdividing of the Kingsbury Farm in 1873 shows this land to be owned by Julia Chouteau Maffit, Sophia Deaver and Maria F. Parker (see map, p. 11).

Our knowledge of the owners of the Skinker-DeBaliviere Area from 1873 to 1901 is rather sketchy. A plat for the dedication of DeBaliviere Avenue, between Delmar and the proposed Kingsbury Boulevard was filed and recorded July 18, 1892. It states that the owners of the 80 foot strip that became DeBaliviere Avenue were Culvin F. Collins and Sudie Y. Collins. They dedicated this strip of land for public use forever. The owners of the land to the west from Kingsbury Boulevard to 210 feet south of Delmar are J. Johnson,

W. S. Fleming, et. al. The owner of the 210 feet south of Delmar is listed as A. K. Steward, Trustee.(59, Book 14, p.122) In 1894 a group of men, William B. Thompson, Cornelius Van der Voet, Lawrence Bruce, Thomas Bayley and Charles V. B. Slade gave the city the right to build and maintain sewers on their land bounded by Delmar on the north, Kingsbury Boulevard on the south, the River Des Peres on the west and the eastern property line of Maria Deaver on the east. Maria Deaver's property line was halfway between the present Hamilton Avenue and Goodfellow Boulevard.(58, Book 1635, p.18)

In 1901, we come upon some surprising real estate transactions. Courtland B. Van Sickler purchased almost all of the land bounded by Skinker on the west, the Forest Park Parkway on the south, DeBaliviere on the east and Delmar on the north. He purchased 3/64 interest in the land mentioned above from Lawrence Bruce. He purchased the now 6100 block of Pershing and the Forest Park Parkway from Irwin Z. Smith. Almost all of the rest of the land in this area he purchased from Caroline McCorkle of St. Louis and Caroline E. Bates of Washington, D.C. How these people selling the land became owners of part of the Kingsbury Farm we do not yet know. Van Sickler remains somewhat of a mystery also. The question can be raised whether or not he was a "straw party" in all these transactions, since he was a clerk at the Carleton Dry Goods Company in 1903 (8), and it seems impossible that he would have so much money of his own to invest.

In 1905, we find George L. Faulhaber selling the land that Van Sickler bought in 1901 to West End Realty Company.(58, Book 1915, p.18) How Faulhaber obtained the land Van Sickler bought in 1901, we do not know.

## THE HISTORY OF OUR LANDMARKS

As our "neighborhood lands" made this change from virgin country to subdivision, four other developments occurred which served to give our neighborhood its present physical definition. The first of these occurrences was the gradual "civilization" of the River Des Peres. It was on the banks of this river that Madame Papin's land grant was laid out. Almost 100 years before the grant and 65 years before the founding of St. Louis, Jesuits from Quebec set up a mission among the Kaskaskia Indians who were living at the mouth of a little stream flowing into the west bank of the Mississippi just east of the present Alabama Avenue. This stream came to be known as River Des Peres or River of the Fathers. (6, p.394).

The head of this stream is about seven miles northwest of Forest Park. (5, p.112) It meanders southward through Survey 378 draining a total watershed of 70,000 acres. The branch which enters the city near Delmar Avenue flows through the Skinker-DeBaliviere area to Forest Park and then eastward to Kingshighway. (56, p.14)

Mr. Claude H. Wetmore (grandfather of Mrs. Betty Renard, one of our present neighbors) described this problematical river in his book Out of a Fleur-de-Lis:

It is a crooked, treacherous thing, this stream, and has borne that reputation since the time when St. Louisians pushed their homes and farms back from the Mississippi's banks; and it has no title to the name of river except during a few months in each year, for in the summer it is a sike, the bed so dry as to offer a comfortable walk, dotted with many rocks which make famous resting-places when one is tired. But let a heavy rain fall and an angry, noisy mass tumbles through St. Louis county and the suburbs of St. Louis city, frothing in its effort to reach the "Father of Waters"; yet the desire satisfied, it refuses to mingle with the main channel and impresses its individuality by an extended yellow streak born of the clay which it has carried along in passage.

Drive out any road that takes you beyond the limits and you will meet the River Des Peres in a half-dozen unexpected places, wriggling and squirming like a snake, doubling on itself frequently and at other times seemingly tied in a bow-knot. Let the rain continue a night and a day, and many of the acres of land that had appeared between the vexatious turns are overflowed; a week's steady downpour and the original crooked river becomes a broad wave, moving over wheat-fields and railroad tracks and reaching out hungrily for the little houses of truck gardeners. (17, p.124)

It was the urbanization of the Skinker-DeBaliviere area which finally led to the concrete encasement of this "individualistic" stream under the street which bears the river's name. The first steps to control the river were taken as more and more construction went on in our neighborhood. In 1914 the City Plan Commission reported that extensive building and street paving in the River Des Peres watershed had caused a greatly increased run-off

of storm water during any rainfall "so that the channel of the stream is not sufficient to carry the volume of water away and serious flooding occurs."(56, p.15)

The storm water problem increased and to it was added a sewage problem. When the Rosedale-Skinker section was developed, a small sewer was built along the bottom of the river which carried not only the sewage of this section, but that of the whole area drained by the river from the city limits to Union Avenue in Forest Park. "The growth of this part of the city has been so great, however, that the increased flow of sewage generally overtaxes the intercepting sewer so that even a small rainfall or even a street sprinkling causes a considerable amount of sewage to overflow into the river channel."(56, p.16)

Although the river was a nuisance to most adults because of the flooding and stench, most of the time it was an exciting play area for the neighborhood children. Judge Daniel B. Tammany, who grew up and still resides in the 6100 block of McPherson Avenue, remembers the river as it was when he was a child. The river banks were "as wide as a street and about 40 or 50 feet deep." The water, however, was only "as wide as a table" except during the spring rains. There were bridges at Waterman, Kingsbury and Delmar for cars and a footbridge at Pershing. Where there were no bridges, wooden barricades ran along the banks. The barricades didn't keep the children from climbing up and down the river banks. Judge Tammany and his friends used to dig caves in the side of the banks and roast potatoes there over open fires.

In March of 1930 work to encase Section F of River Des Peres began. This section includes the portion of the river which runs through our neighborhood.(62) During this construction, part of Voges' drugstore, located on the northeast corner of Kingsbury and Des Peres Avenues, collapsed as did some corner houses. Other corner houses were purposely demolished to prevent their untimely collapse. The work was completed in 1931 and the river no longer served to divide the neighborhood. Our "individualistic" river has not been completely "civilized", however, and still brings problems of leaking and settling to basements on corner lots along Des Peres Avenue and even minor street flooding as recently as 1970.

A second occurrence which helped shape and define our neighborhood was the creation and development of Forest Park. Forest Park has more of a relationship to the neighborhood than just forming its southern boundary. The World's Fair held in this park resulted in improved transportation and in publicity for an area of St. Louis which at the turn of the century was mostly vacant land available for development. The proximity of Forest Park, with its recreational and cultural facilities, made potential homes nearby highly desirable. This proximity brought the neighborhood rapid development after the World's Fair.

Although Forest Park is now an outstanding recreational and cultural center, its creation was extremely controversial. Hiram W. Leffingwell proposed the creation of this park and led the forces which battled for four years in and out of court to have that proposal approved. One source speaks of Mr. Leffingwell and his "patriotic associates [who] did not stand to profit in any way from the proposed development."(35, p.5) Other sources say Leffingwell, a successful real estate promoter, was inspired by the high prices of lots surrounding New

York City's Central Park. In the late 1860s Leffingwell had gained control of 40 or 50 acres in the west part of the Lindell Tract along the east side of Kingshighway. Kingshighway was then a muddy lane running through a flat swampy meadow alongside the Cabanne dairy farm which included the site of the present Westmoreland and Portland Places. The idea of selling lots there would seem fantastic to most men, but Leffingwell had an ingenious sales idea. He would get a park established across from his subdivision and be able to charge high prices for lots surrounding this St. Louis park just as had been done for lots surrounding New York's Central Park.(6, p.192)

In 1870 Leffingwell had a plan of the proposed park drawn up and obtained the pledge of Nicholas M. Bell, who had just been elected to the state legislature, to introduce the bill authorizing the purchase of land for a park. This bill provided for setting aside some 2,754 acres by the County Court for purchase by the City of St. Louis. Since the owners of property surrounding the proposed park site would receive a special benefit from the park (an increase in their property value), they would be subject to a special tax. The bill was enacted on March 25, 1872.

Angry citizens immediately protested violently and called for the resignation of Nicholas Bell. Some opponents claimed the park was meant to be a playground for the rich since it would be so inaccessible by public transportation. Others said the land would be better off put to agricultural or industrial use. The objection raised against the creation of a special tax district was what caused the act to be declared unconstitutional. Since the park was to be of benefit for the whole county (which included the City of St. Louis at that time), the Missouri Supreme Court ruled it to be unfair to place a tax only on some landowners to support it.

Leffingwell did not give up. He and his park supporters, including Nicholas Bell and Presiding County Court Judge Joseph O'Neil, launched a campaign to educate the public to the benefits of the proposed park. In 1873 this campaign seemed so successful that another attempt was made to get enabling legislation, but no bill was enacted that year. (39, p.36, 37, 50) The strongest objections to the park were heard in the far southern and northern parts of the city where citizens said they could take little advantage of a park which would be so far away. Leffingwell promised to support a park both in the south and the north in return for the support of citizens in those areas for his Forest Park. As a result of this, the City now has Carondelet Park in the south and O'Fallon Park in the north. (6, p.192)

Former legislator Nicholas Bell, who was in the commission business, was responsible for convincing the two most powerful landowners in the proposed park area, Thomas Skinker and William Forsythe, that a park would enhance the value of their property. He related the following incident which occurred on February 14, 1873:

I went out to Forsythe's house to see him about the sale of wool from his angora goats that were grazing on the acreage under consideration for park purposes. Mr. Forsythe invited me to stay for dinner, and I accepted. While we were at the table, I suddenly turned to Forsythe and said: "Mr. Forsythe, we are good friends and I have

just showed you a way to make money off your goat wool. Will you listen to me on a park proposition?" Forsythe said he would. So I told him that instead of taking 2,800 acres, we would split the tract, starting from the southeast corner. In so doing, part of his land would be in the park and part of it outside. I told him I would agree to go before the County Court and ask that he be allowed \$600 an acre for all the land he sold. I also pointed out that any land he had left would be enhanced in value because of its proximity to the park.

"Tell it to me again, Nick," Forsythe exclaimed. I did, and he accepted. Then he said he would go over and see Tom Skinner, who owned considerable acreage that would go into the park. Forsythe brought pressure to bear on his friend, and before the day was over I had these two fellows signed to a written agreement whereby they abandoned all opposition to the park bill. Inasmuch as they were the chief property owners and had financed the objection, the rest was easy and the Forest Park bill was passed that year. Under it St. Louis acquired 1,369 acres of land for park purposes at a total cost, I believe, of approximately \$849,000. (21, p. 232)

While this "education and persuasion" campaign was being carried on by Leffingwell and Bell, Joseph O'Neil, Presiding Judge of the County Court, advanced \$25,000 of his own funds for an option on much of the proposed park land which was for sale at an unusually reasonable price. This option held the land until The Forest Park Act authorizing the purchase of the land was finally enacted in 1874. (38)

This Act reduced the acreage of the park from 2,754 to 1,374 (in accord with what Bell had promised Forsythe). It approved the sale of bonds for the purchase of the land and increased taxes on all county residents by one-half mill on a dollar for payment and improvement of the park. Suit was also brought against this act by landowners William D. Griswold, Samuel N. Holliday, Charles P. Chouteau and Julia Chouteau Maffitt, whose property would be purchased for the park. They challenged the constitutionality of the act on two points: first, that the park was too distant from many parts of the county and therefore was not of benefit to all the citizens; second, that landowners were not offered a fair price for their property. Their suit was unsuccessful, however, and the last obstacle to the creation of the park was removed. (39, p. 53)

The County Court was given purchase power and appointed three appraisers, John G. Priest, Charles Green and Theophile Papin, to value the grounds and make the allotments of payment to the owners. Coincidentally, Mr. Theophile Papin was the grandson of Joseph Marie and Marie Louise Papin, original owners of most of the tract of land. Hyde and Conard, in their Encyclopedia of the History of St. Louis, report:

Years before the park was ever dreamed of, that portion of the Papin farm now included within its limits was sold for a trifling consideration. When condemned for city use, it brought nearly \$800,000. The grandfather little thought that the trading town of 5,000 population would grow into a great city of over 600,000 inhabitants; that the very farm and home where his family of children were born and grew up, several miles distant from the trading town, would be taken for a public

park; or, that his own grandson would have an official part in the proceedings for its transfer to the city.(9, p.1694)

From the time of its official opening on June 25, 1876, Forest Park was continually improved and beautified. In 1890 a series of events began which catapulted the park into world prominence. In that year the federal government was planning an historical exposition celebrating the 400th anniversary of the discovery of America. Missouri's Governor, David R. Francis, headed a delegation to Washington, D.C., to persuade the federal government to locate the exposition in St. Louis. Although the delegation was unsuccessful, the idea of a world's fair with an historical theme later developed into the St. Louis Louisiana Purchase Exposition of 1904, celebrating the acquisition of the Louisiana Territory by the United States. Ex-governor Francis was president of the World's Fair Company.

The Fair occupied the western two-thirds of Forest Park (see map, p. 19). It included the territory west of the park to Big Bend and north of the park to the railroad tracks west of DeBaliviere Avenue. The main entrance was located where the Jefferson Memorial now stands. As mentioned earlier, the amusement department of the Fair, called "The Pike", occupied the Catlin Tract.(6, p. 334-335)

The 1904 World's Fair left some permanent improvements in Forest Park. Some of these improvements were the result of preparing the park for the Fair. The River Des Peres was the biggest problem confronting the engineers of the Fair Company. It wound every which way through the park and presented a constant threat of flooding. It was decided to straighten the river as much as possible. The length of the river through the exposition grounds was cut from 8,800 feet to 4,656 feet. The new river channel followed the course of the principal streets of the Fair and thus had to be covered. This construction was entirely of wood. The entire cost of construction and excavation was \$125,000. A new sewer system was also constructed.(5, p.112-116) Outside the Fair grounds, where the river was not covered, two new bridges were built. Besides the improvement of the River Des Peres, paved roads were constructed, a system of lakes along the eastern boundary of the park outside the Fair grounds was developed and the park was made easily accessible by public transportation.(16, p.235)

Other improvements in the park are actual structures left from the Fair. "The Palace of Art" was the only structure of the Fair originally designed to remain after the end of the Fair and for this reason it was the only building constructed of stone. The center portion of this building is our present Art Museum. The Bird Cage at the zoo is also left from the Fair. Although the statue of Saint Louis standing before the Art Museum did not exist in 1904, there was a plaster of Paris model of the statue in front of the Palace of Art. It was from the same mold that the present statue was cast. In our neighborhood, the building which housed the jai alai courts for the Exposition was left at the corner of Kingsbury and DeBaliviere. This became the Winter Garden Skating Rink until it was demolished in the Sixties and replaced by a supermarket.

Forest Park also benefited from the dismantling of the Fair. Mr. Rolla Wells, Mayor of St. Louis during the Fair, was insistent that Forest Park be restored to its original beauty after





the Fair. On July 29, 1904, the Fair Management Company had to post a bond of \$650,000 for this restoration. After the Fair, the Chicago Wrecking Company was hired to clear away the buildings and debris. George E. Kessler was selected to plan and direct the restoration of the landscape. Under Mr. Kessler's direction, 75,000 trees and shrubs were planted and 200 acres of meadow grassed. (16, p.233-235) The work of the wrecking company "was done with great caution. Guards from the army detachment on duty during the Fair remained after the close of the Exposition to prevent theft. Extensive records were made to prevent loss and great care was exercised to avoid fire. With few exceptions the materials from the buildings were transported to Chicago and sold there." (19, p.458) Although we have heard for many years that materials from the Fair were used in the construction of our neighborhood homes, our research seems not to support these stories. We would like very much to hear from anyone in the neighborhood who could authenticate World's Fair materials in their home.

Ironically, two permanent park buildings were constructed as a result of dismantling the Fair. The Fair Management Company and the city disagreed about the removal of a small bridge and some drainage pipes. To compensate for not removing these structures, the Fair Company built the public shelter pavilion located on a hill just east of the main zoo entrance at a cost of \$40,000. The Jefferson Memorial Building was constructed with the money made from selling the salvage from the Fair. (19, p.466)

The third occurrence which is important in shaping our neighborhood is the development of the present campus of Washington University. Washington University had its beginning east of the neighborhood. On February 22, 1853 the Missouri Legislature incorporated Eliot Seminary named after its chief promoter, Dr. William G. Eliot. A year later, February 22, 1854, Dr. Eliot was elected president of the institution. He suggested his name be eliminated from the school. Because both the incorporation and the election of the first president of the school occurred on February 22, the birthday of George Washington, the name was changed to Washington University in 1857. The first building occupied by the University was a small square building on the northwest corner of 17th and St. Charles Streets. Samuel Cupples had long been interested in the welfare of Washington University. Robert S. Brookings, his partner in the woodenware business, soon shared this interest. It was because of Mr. Brookings that the University was rebuilt in its present location.

At the time of the World's Fair, the University had not moved into its present buildings so these buildings were rented to the Fair for administrative purposes and to house very valuable exhibits. In keeping with the theme of the Fair, the Ridgley Library building was patterned after the Cabildo Building in New Orleans where formal transfer of the Louisiana Territory took place. The University's field house and playing field were used for the Olympic contests of the Fair and named for ex-governor Francis who was president of the Fair company. (6, p.250)

The fourth development which most immediately defined the Skinker-DeBaliviere Neighborhood was the laying out, construction and naming of our streets. The street names fall into two groups--those that are the continuation of streets already named in developments east and north of the neighborhood and those which are connected with the history of this

particular area. Coming to us from the east are such streets as Lindell which is named for a family whose members, Peter and Jesse, were very successful business men and later holders of vast tracts of land in the early and middle 19th century.(6, p.343) McPherson Avenue also begins east of our neighborhood and similar is named for a very successful business man, lawyer and real estate man, William M. McPherson. It was through real estate that he amassed his fortune, but he was involved in such diversified enterprises as organizing the Bellefontaine Cemetery Association, serving as president of Missouri Pacific Railroad, and holding extensive stock in the St. Louis Bridge Company and several banks. (13, p.229-230) Washington is named for our first President. Delmar gets its name from the history of land east of our neighborhood. This street followed the boundary line between two tracts of property--one owned by Trusten Polk, the other by John Hogan. Since Polk was from Delaware and Hogan from Maryland, the street name was derived from the combined first three letters of each state name.(36) Westminster was probably named by a man having English family heritage. Laurel is named for the tree and originates in a subdivision using tree names. Hamilton Avenue perpetuates the name of Hamilton R. Gamble, governor of the state. The Forest Park Parkway takes its name from the park it runs beside and through from Kingshighway to Skinker.(6, p.344) No explanation of either Rosedale or Nina could be found. However, we do know that Washington Heights 1st Addition was developed by Nina Realty Company.

Another group of street names comes from the family history of the Kingsburys and appears on the plat showing the division of the Kingsbury Farm in 1873 (see p. 11). The most obvious of this group is Kingsbury Avenue. Both Kingsbury daughters attended a convent school in Paris whose Mother Superior was Madame DeBaliviere. The title of Mary Virginia's husband, Armond Francois Robert, Count DeGiverville, was given to a street originally planned to run westward from Union to Skinker. When Parkview and Washington Heights subdivisions were developed, the sections of the original DeGiverville from DeBaliviere east to Union and the Wabash Railroad tracks west into Parkview were renamed Berlin. After this, DeGiverville began at DeBaliviere and ran parallel to the railroad tracks curving to end at Delmar Avenue a short distance north. Several years later, in 1918 during World War I, the name Berlin was changed to Pershing.(6, p.344) This was done both to honor Missouri's General John J. "Black Jack" Pershing and to remove the German name (a common patriotic practice--sauerkraut was renamed "victory cabbage"). Adele Kingsbury's husband gave his name to two streets--the present Waterman Avenue bears his last name. The present Belt Avenue originally bore his first name--Alfred. Another street named for the Kingsbury girls' grandfather, Jacob Kingsbury, was shown on the plat of 1873, but evidently never developed.(see p. 11)

One street in our neighborhood was the center of controversy around the time of the World's Fair--Skinker Road. Many people felt that Skinker Road was not an appropriate name for a thoroughfare of such wide prominence. Mr. Gibson, a St. Louis councilman, introduced a bill to change the name from Skinker Road to Rochambeau Avenue. This name was in honor of the French count who aided American independence and took into account the fact that the French exhibit at the Fair would be located on this road.(60, p. 123)

The name was not changed. In fact, a poetry contest was held by The St. Louis Republic

to inspire local pride in the name Skinker Road. Walter B. Stevens, Secretary of the World's Fair Company, was quoted in The Republic of September 14, 1902 as saying: "The idea of awakening local pride in giving to the 'Midway' of the Exposition the stickative title of Skinker Road is thoroughly American in sentiment and the proposed poetry contest is a fine medium of arousing popular interest in the perpetuation of a highway filled with the city's earliest savor." (60, p.124) The contest was won by a Kentuckian, Mr. Henry Cleveland Wood, and is discussed by characters in Mr. Wetmore's book:

"Skinker! What a prosaic name," exclaimed Mrs. LeGrande.

"Yet they have written poetry about it," said her sister.

"It must have been a very difficult task."

"Poets can do anything. Marietta, do you remember the verses that were judged the best in the prize contest?"

"Yes, mother. The poem is named 'Polly,'" and she recited:--

"Oh! Polly do you mind the day  
When Dobbin bore a double load,  
And you and I were on the way  
To Singin up the Skinker Road?

"Your bonnet caught a brier spray  
That pulled it and your hair awry;  
I freed you in my awkward way,  
And--then! don't blush; I won't tell why.

"Ah! that was many a year ago.  
How time does fly when hearts beat true;  
Your cheeks were red as roses blow.  
Your eyes like diamonds made of dew.

"How scenes have changed and faces passed,  
Fond hearts grown still that with love beat;  
Our own heads crowned with snow at last,  
Life's path now trod with halting feet.

"Yet once again the winding ways  
We travel to the Great World's Fair.  
What! this the spot of other days?  
And blushing, sweetheart, I declare." (17, p.115-116)

## SUBDIVIDING FOR RESIDENTIAL LIVING

The history of our neighborhood land until it became the Kingsbury Farm, the subsequent division of the Farm between the two Kingsbury girls, and the influence of the River Des Peres, Forest Park and Washington University upon our portion of the city are extremely important as we begin to trace the actual development plans and construction.

No doubt many men over the years had examined and appraised the land on which the neighborhood sits, considering how best to develop it. Bell Place (Washington Terrace and Kingsbury Place) had begun in 1894. The Cabanne District north of Delmar had long been under development as a fine residential area. Forest Park was officially opened in 1876 (the same year that the city and county had separated). The road to Thomas Skinker's home (near what is now Ellenwood Avenue just beyond the city limits in Clayton) had been travelled at least every Sunday, when Skinker held a sort of "Open House" for his friends all day. (18, p. 156) Surveyors must have been on our land over and over again. Why was it still undeveloped territory at the turn of the century?

As can be seen from the map explaining the division of the Kingsbury Farm (see p. 11), the River Des Peres snakes back and forth through the area. The quotation earlier in this history (see p. 14), concerning the river overflowing the land between its turns after a hard rain, explains why our area was not already developed. The river would have to be controlled before development began, and that would have meant a large investment. Taking all of this into consideration, it is not surprising to find that when development actually began, this entire area was under the control of a single company. That company was the Parkview Realty and Improvement Company, an association of men apparently investing large sums of money. We have no way of knowing who was included or how much money was involved from each man. That Parkview Realty did intend to treat what is now the entire Skinker-DeBaliviere Neighborhood as a single entity is spelled out later, as will be seen in the discussion of their 1903 Prospectus. For this reason, we have focussed our research on The Parkview Realty and Improvement Company and attempted to follow its various transactions over the years of primary development. Each portion of the Parkview Realty story has had some impact on making our neighborhood what it is today.

On November 12, 1901, Henry S. Caulfield, attorney for the Lincoln Trust Company of St. Louis, forwarded to the Missouri Secretary of State the certified articles of incorporation for "The Parkview Realty and Improvement Company" plus Lincoln Trust's check to cover incorporation tax and the state's fee. The incorporation papers were filed and recorded November 13, 1901. Parkview Realty's capital stock was \$5,500,000, a huge sum for that time. This was to be divided into 55,000 shares of \$100 each. (48) The stock and the company directorships were oddly divided among the six original incorporators. The major identifiable stockholder was Adrian Ogle Rule, vice president of Kilgen-Rule Real Estate Company. (3, p. 515) Of the 55,000 shares, 5,000 were preferred and 50,000 common. Rule held all 5,000 preferred shares plus 4,170 shares of common stock, apparently a personal investment of \$917,000. Rule was also one of the five

directors named in the articles of incorporation. The other four directors were: Thomas Wright, a former cigar manufacturer who was engaged in real estate, investments and banking at the time;(3, p.652) George F. Durant, General Manager of Bell Telephone Company of Missouri and first vice president of the Lincoln Trust Company;(2, p.169) Edward H. Coffin, St. Louis passenger and ticket agent for the Wabash Railroad;(3, p.125) and Moses Greenwood, Jr., a former U. S. Assistant Civil Engineer associated with his father in a general real estate business.(2, p.238) These last four owned one share of common stock (at \$100) each, and were named directors. Courtland B. Van Sickler was not named a director and subscribed for 45,826 shares of common stock (\$4,582,600). He was listed in Gould's 1903 Directory of the City of St. Louis as a clerk at the Carleton Dry Goods Company.(8) Van Sickler had a lot of money at his disposal in 1901. He not only made this enormous investment but also bought some interesting parcels of land, cited previously (see p. 13). Perhaps someday it will be discovered just who (singular or plural) Van Sickler was. It could be quite interesting! On February 10, 1902, a meeting of the stockholders of the Parkview Realty and Improvement Co. voted to change the number of directors from five to seven; names of new (and/or different) directors at this time are unknown.(48)

Despite the fact that Parkview Realty's incorporation papers state that "the same amount of capital stock-\$5,500,000 has been bonafide subscribed and all thereof actually paid up in lawful money of the United States, which is in the custody of the persons hereinafter named, as the first Board of Directors,"(48) less than a year after incorporation, in 1901, and the addition of two more presumably wealthy persons to its Board of Directors, Parkview Realty was apparently in money trouble. The company had debts of \$3,500,000 on the land it owned: the Catlin Tract, the present Parkview Subdivision, and the land from Skinker to DeBaliviere, Delmar to the present Forest Park Parkway, excepting the northeast corner (Laurel to DeBaliviere, Delmar to the alley north of McPherson).

The World's Fair site had been officially selected on June 28, 1901,(5, p.46) and Parkview Realty's large parcel of land on the Fair's northern boundary could conceivably be leased to hotels, restaurants, and exhibitors who wanted to be nearby, or even as campgrounds for Fair-goers (as actually happened in University City). Whether there was real financial difficulty within Parkview Realty or not, we don't know, but the possibilities should be presented.

Their property, excepting the Catlin Tract, had been purchased from eighteen different owners by this new, seemingly innocuous developer. On July 1, 1902, Parkview Realty took out a first mortgage on all their land for \$3,500,000 in order to consolidate and pay off their debts. This mortgage was held by Lincoln Trust Company, who was to issue 5,000 5% gold bonds as the need arose.(32) With a lack of hard facts, questions easily arise. Was it easier to buy the land as a simple real estate development company and was Lincoln Trust, through its officers, behind this whole deal from the beginning? Remember, George F. Durant was Lincoln's first vice president. Or was his interest purely personal, and when financial difficulties arose, his contact with Lincoln Trust merely a godsend to bail them out? How about Lincoln Trust's president, A.A.B.

Woerheide, who became prominent in development of the Parkview Subdivision? Was his later involvement merely to protect Lincoln Trust's investment in this mortgage? Consider Edward H. Coffin, an original Parkview Realty director, who was associated with the Wabash Railroad which ran through this area. Was he merely understandably bright in seeing the possibilities of the land through which the railroad passed or did he represent speculative railroad interests?

Then there is Thomas Wright. He was the president of Parkview Realty and a real estate and investments man himself. Or perhaps the key lies with the only identifiable large investor, Parkview Realty's secretary, real estate man Adrian O. Rule. Were the plans for the World's Fair the whole reason for Parkview Realty's existence? Perhaps this whole deal was open, aboveboard and purely business speculation, the presence of Courtland B. Van Sickler and his huge pile of money merely obscuring sound business practices from our view some 70 years later. Whatever the case, we hope that this illustrates the need for maintaining an ongoing neighborhood history, to limit the speculations caused by lack of information.

Probably sometime during 1903, another phase of Parkview Realty and Improvement Company's history began to unfold. The company issued a "Prospectus", not printed as were so many documents meant for public eyes, but typed with carbon copies or "dittoed" which probably meant a very limited distribution. This prospectus proposed formation of a new real estate company to buy and develop what is now the Parkview Subdivision, emphasizing the investment possibilities in a scheme which indicated a return of 370% on investment in three years.(53) The map accompanying the Prospectus clearly showed the "Grounds of the Louisiana Purchase World's Fair" colored red, with placement of the larger buildings blocked in. This appears to be Parkview Realty's own map to indicate the location of its properties within the metropolitan area. Hand-shaded in blue, the area of development by the proposed new company is clearly visible. The prospectus states Parkview Realty's intentions of "improving the immense tract" they owned "as one property, which plan would so develop that the building and treatment of each part will add to the value and betterment of the remainder."(53) By the time the Prospectus was issued, the Catlin Tract from Union to Skinker had already been "graded and improved with streets, gutters, curbs, sidewalks, sewers, gas, trees and shrubs, all at an expense of about \$350,000"(53) The rest of Parkview Realty's property, from DeBaliviere to Melville, and Delmar to the railroad right-of-way, had just been graded at a cost of about \$500,000. To quote from the Prospectus:

This newly graded portion has peculiar value because of the following reasons:

1. It is directly in the line of channel of the best residential property in the City, and is the last and only property of its kind that remains;
2. Its surroundings are all that can be desired - Westmoreland, Portland and Bell Places on the East, - the Cabanne District on the North, - and Forest Park and the Washington University, with its magnificent endowment on the South insure for this property for all time to come, desirable features and an

exclusiveness with social surroundings which are most essential factors in the problem of permanent values.

3. The transportation facilities are perfect as a double street car loop has been provided, - with a double track West on Delmar to Skinker Road and East on DeGiverville now Pershing and McPherson Avenues, to accommodate all Olive Street cars, which will divide at Taylor, one-half going North and West on Delmar to Skinker Road, and return East on DeGiverville and McPherson Avenues, the other one-half going West on McPherson and DeGiverville to Skinker Road, and returning East on Delmar Avenue to Taylor and Olive.
4. The City Water is in Skinker Road, and the grading has been completed and the most desirable of all grades established, viz., an Eastern Slope, i.e., the grade beginning at DeBaliviere Avenue rises gradually and uniformly to the Western Limits of the property at Melville Avenue, which is 40 feet above DeBaliviere on Kingsbury Boulevard, the centre of this property. (53)

Parkview Realty's plans for all of its property, as listed in this seemingly private Prospectus, are what have led us to surmise that there might have been prior knowledge of the site of the Fair, before it became officially selected. They state:

The Parkview Company divides its property into three tracts and proposes to treat them as follows:

First: The Catlin Tract - to lease to World's Fair, Railroads and Hotels.

Second: That portion between DeBaliviere Avenue and Skinker Road-temporarily to lease to Hotels, Restaurants, Cottages, &c., for World's Fair purposes, and after the Fair to be devoted to high-class Apartment Houses and Residences.

Third: That portion West of Skinker Road to be sold to a Company at a nominal price in order to secure immediate improvement of streets, buildings, &c., which will be undertaken at once, and thus enhance and add to the value of the remainder of the property which will be handsomely improved when the contemplated temporary structures shall have been removed. (53)

It is the third tract of land with which this Prospectus deals, and for acquisition and development of which the proposed new company is to be formed:

It is the purpose of those who form the new Company to purchase this tract of ground and to thoroughly improve the same with streets, sewers, sidewalks, curbs, water, &c., and to arrange for the building of flats or apartments on portions of the property, reserving the remainder for artistic homes, in this artistic tract in the midst of these artistic surroundings. (53)



In the "Financial Scheme" section of the Prospectus is the heart of the proposal: organize a company under Missouri laws with a capital stock of \$200,000; \$50,000 as first payment on the property, \$150,000 to have the improvements made at \$7.50 per front foot. Presumably Parkview Realty would do this with the cash from the capital stock subscription. Parkview Realty estimated conservatively that the value of the improved lots, "without adding anything for World's Fair values. . . would be from \$75.00 to \$100.00 per front foot" and ". . . agreed to sell this property to a syndicate of friends and insiders at practical cost to the Company, viz., \$32.50 per foot or \$650,000." The company wanted \$50,000 in cash and a deed of trust for \$600,000 at 5% for three years. ". . . the terms are such as to enable the subscribers to realize the maximum of returns for the minimum of investment, for if the property is bought, improved and sold within three years at an average price of \$75.00 per front foot, the return to each subscriber of \$5,000 would be \$18,500 . . ." says the Prospectus.(53)

There is no doubt that the offer made by the Prospectus was considered a good one indeed. On January 11, 1904 Articles of Association were signed forming just such a company as the Prospectus had proposed: to buy for \$650,000 the land of Parkview Realty west of Skinker, lay it out, improve it, sell it, form a corporation and accumulate a cash fund of "not less than \$200,000 nor more than \$300,000." Lincoln Trust Company of St. Louis was to be agent and trustee, to hold the money, and to get the company incorporated. The signatures of 24 prominent St. Louis business and professional men, with their pledges of \$5,000 each, appear on this document. The Kilgen-Rule Realty Company pledged \$16,000 under the signature of its president, Rudolph F. Kilgen. Architect William Albert Swasey made a trustee's pledge of \$50,000. Adrian O. Rule, leading identifiable stockholder in Parkview Realty and Improvement Co., pledged \$5,000 and was one of the original trustees.(29) Presumably his initial investment in the property was taken into account in waiving the rest of the trustee investment. Another original Parkview trustee was Henry S. Caulfield, whose signature and pledge do not appear on this original document but among whose papers the document was found. If Caulfield had indeed also pledged \$50,000 as a trustee, the total cash fund of the company would have totalled \$236,000, enough to have the improvements made and a little extra capital.

The signers of these Articles of Association were obviously the "friends and insiders" the Prospectus intended to sell to: Thomas Wright, an original director of Parkview Realty; A.A.B. Woerheide, president of Lincoln Trust Company at the time of Parkview Realty's incorporation; George W. Lubke, Lincoln Trust's second vice president; J. H. August Meyer, their third vice president, and presumably Henry S. Caulfield, Lincoln Trust's attorney at that time. Other signatures include:

Julius Pitzman--brilliant longtime City Surveyor and planner of "private places" (Benton, Vandeventer, Westmoreland and Portland, as well as Compton Heights, Flora Boulevard--and Parkview Subdivision), the introducer of "the system of selling property under restrictions" and "chief engineer of Forest Park until plan was completed and drives laid out".(3)

Henry Nicolaus--rich brewer who Lincoln Steffens reports in his 1904 book The Shame of the Cities, was tried for bribery during the reform era in St. Louis and who quickly

received a directed verdict of not guilty when he pleaded ignorance of where his money had gone.

Murray Carleton--president of Carleton Dry Goods Co., where the mysterious Courtland B. Van Sickler worked as a clerk.

Bernard Griesedieck--secretary of the National Brewing Company.

L. R. Blackmer--president of Blackmer & Post Pipe Co., manufacturers of sewer pipes and kindred products.

C. Marquard Forster--vice president of the St. Louis Brewing Association and manager of the City Brewery Branch thereof.

Charles M. Skinner--president of Buxton and Skinner Stationery Company.

John C. Roberts--vice president of Roberts, Johnson and Rand Shoe Company (later International Shoe Company).

Antoine B. du Pont--second vice president of the St. Louis Transit Company.

Ferdinand Herold--president of the Cherokee Packet Company and owner of a zinc mine at Webb City, Missouri.

Charles R. Blake--president of Sligo Iron Store Company, iron merchants.

George E. W. Luehrmann--president and treasurer of Charles F. Luehrmann Hardwood Lumber Company.

Moses H. Alexander--funeral director, who later listed himself as a director of Beredith Realty Company.

Fred Schafer--unidentified, perhaps in the insurance business.

Dr. Augustus C. Bernays--internationally known surgeon, professor of anatomy and surgery at medical colleges of St. Louis.

Lizzie Blumeyer--mother of George Blumeyer, president of the Eagle Supply Company.

Sylvester P. Keyes--president of Keyes-Marshall Bros. Livery Company, with seven locations, one at the Planters Hotel.

Henry J. Stolle--treasurer, J. S. Merrell Drug Company, wholesale drugs.

Gustave W. Niemann--president of the Title Guaranty and Trust Company. (2, 3, 8, 9)

Preparing the way for the appearance of another (as we speculate) Courtland B. Van Sickler type, these real Articles of Association say outright that the persons signing may have a "straw party" stockholder in the future corporation who will immediately transfer his stock and interests in that corporation to the person who has actually put in the money. These "straw parties" may or may not even have a legitimate interest in the corporation themselves.

Parkview Realty, meanwhile, was looking to the World's Fair to realize some profits, as the Prospectus has shown. When the western half of Forest Park was selected as the Fair's site in June, 1901, the architects commissioned to design the Fair decided that this 657 acres "would not afford sufficient space for the plans in contemplation. Negotiations were opened looking to the annexation of additional territory for exposition purposes." (5, p.46) Accordingly, the Catlin Tract from DeBaliviere to Skinker (59.6 acres) was leased and became the "Pike" area, and another 1.5 acres of Parkview Realty's land was added. This resulted in payments totalling \$208,500 by the Louisiana Purchase Exposition Company to Parkview Realty.

The great plans for leasing land "to Hotels, Restaurants, Cottages, &c., for World's Fair purposes" mentioned in the Prospectus apparently never materialized. Aborted plans for a midway off the grounds of the Fair, which were thwarted by the Fair's leasing of the Catlin Tract for "The Pike", (5, p.92) could well have been part of Parkview Realty's plans, not fully stated in the Prospectus. The official book of maps of the World's Fair shows only a frame hotel ("The Germania") at the northeast corner of Skinker and Forest Park Parkway. No other buildings (temporary or permanent) existed within all of Parkview Realty's land with the exception of the Catlin Tract's "Pike". Several large hotels, however, were constructed on the east side of DeBaliviere. If the off-grounds midway idea was indeed Parkview Realty's, it would account for the curious specification in the Deed of Trust between Parkview Realty and Lincoln Trust in 1902 that leases could be made but that "no lease shall be made . . . for a term continuing longer than July 1, 1907", (32) although the bonds to be issued under the Deed of Trust were not payable until July 1, 1912. This could be construed to insure that the Fair people were paid up and gone before the bonds came due.

By 1905, the Fair over and in the process of being dismantled, actual development of our neighborhood began. The Parkview Subdivision plat was filed and recorded at the Office of the St. Louis Recorder of Deeds (59, Book 17, pp.42-43) on November 21, 1905 by Beredith Realty Company, A.A.B. Woerheide, president, J. H. August Meyer, assistant secretary. On August 8, 1904, Beredith Realty had hired St. Louis architect William Albert Swasey (one of the signers of the Articles of Association, presumably as a trustee) to do the architectural work and supervision on at least 20 houses in the Parkview Subdivision for a period of three years. (31)

Julius Pitzman himself had designed this subdivision and drawn upon the experience gained from problems developing within his earlier designs. There are no straight-through streets, no long vistas of houses sitting in rows. All streets are curved and, where there could have been a typical subdivision view of houses upon houses in all directions, small triangular parks with trees offer instead a sense of privacy from all but immediate neighbors. (50)

The Parkview Subdivision was also set up as a trusteeship, with Adrian O. Rule, John C. Roberts, and Henry S. Caulfield as the first trustees. (58, Book 1910, p.1) The trustees in effect controlled the land. A comprehensive list of restrictions on the property of the subdivision existed, seeking to preserve its character as a fine dignified residential area within reasonable reach of the business, educational and cultural core of the metropolitan area. Buyers were expected to understand and agree to the restrictions. This trusteeship worked quite well for many years, until progress and inflation made some of its provisions unworkable. Governor Caulfield himself, as the last of the original trustees, assisted in planning for the change in control which would be necessitated by his death. The change from trusteeship to agency control of the subdivision occurred in June, 1966. (47)

Even before Parkview Subdivision's plat had been filed, Beredith Realty had signed a gas easement agreement with Laclede Gas Light Company on August 1, 1905. (30) Beredith, presumably the corporation set up by the Articles of Association, was ready to go. But their architect, Swasey, had moved to New York City and a letter from Beredith to Swasey,

dated September 22, 1906, shows that problems had arisen. Accordingly, in this letter the contract with Swasey was dissolved by mutual agreement and an ongoing dispute over payment for work already completed was settled thus: having already been paid \$4,000, Swasey would pay back \$1,500 and give all studies, sketches and specifications already made to Beredith for their exclusive use. In return, Beredith would convey to Irene McN. Swasey a choice lot in the Parkview Subdivision.(31) This long distance disagreement is the probable reason that no one was actually listed as living in the Parkview Subdivision until 1908.(7)

Returning to our embattled friends at the Parkview Realty and Improvement Co., we find them receiving an offer for the whole of what was left of their original holdings (Delmar to Forest Park Parkway, Skinker to DeBaliviere, excepting a small portion at the northeast corner) in November, 1905. A new group called West End Realty Company offered a purchase price of \$1,785,000.(70) On January 9, 1907, West End Realty filed and recorded a plat for the Washington Heights Subdivision (that area we now call Rosedale-Skinker), bounded by Delmar and Forest Park Parkway, Skinker and Des Peres Avenue (the last projected as a private street).(59, Book 17, #2, pp.118-119)

## THE NEIGHBORHOOD TAKES SHAPE

The year 1908 marked our neighborhood's actual beginning. Whatever the plans and schemes had intended, it was not until 1908 that people actually lived here. Gould's Directory (Blue Book) for 1908, which listed only "prominent" citizens living in the City of St. Louis and the metropolitan area, alphabetically by name and then numerically by street address, suddenly listed 17 families living in Parkview. One of these "first families of Parkview" was that of C. Marquard Forster, a signer of the Articles of Association and presumably a director of Beredith Realty. One member of the first family on Westminster was Elmore Cave, treasurer of Kilgen-Rule Real Estate Co.(8) and undoubtedly a relative by marriage of Adrian O. Rule. Rule had married Julia Cave in 1895 and had a son named Elmore.(3, p.515) Washington Heights Subdivision (Rosedale-Skinker) had five families listed in 1908, all living very near Skinker Road. Skinker was probably the only usable thoroughfare amidst the increasing construction.

In 1909, another 12 families had been listed in Parkview and 35 more in Washington Heights Subdivision. We can get an impression of our neighborhood's first residents by looking at Gould's Red Books, which listed alphabetically all citizens, their occupation and their residence. While they were certainly not the richest of the rich, these people were definitely well-to-do small businessmen (many real estate men), professional men (architects, physicians, many lawyers, etc.), and the upper-level management people in large or medium-sized business firms.(8)

Apparently this area was considered ripe for continued development, for on June 18, 1909, the plat for Washington Heights 1st Addition (the major part of what we now call Washington Heights) was filed with the Recorder of Deeds.(59, Book 18, pp.56-59) This large subdivision ran from Delmar to Forest Park Parkway, and Des Peres Avenue to DeBaliviere, excepting the plot of land between Laurel and DeBaliviere, Delmar and the alley north of McPherson. The developer was not West End Realty, who had owned the land in 1907, but Nina Realty Company, whose vice president, George Wilson, and secretary, Cliff H. McMillan, were vice president and secretary of Mercantile Trust Company, respectively.

On May 4th and 5th, 1910, there appeared large advertisements about an upcoming auction May 7th for lots in Washington Heights 1st Addition with directions on how to get there by streetcar. Mercantile Trust Company was in charge of the auction. The long-awaited removal of the Rock Island Railroad yards (located just east of DeBaliviere near Lindell--see map p. 19) was emphasized as opening up to fine residential living the last available tract in the city's west end. A more positive incentive for moving out here was the enhancement of the area by the soon-to-be constructed Missouri Historical Society building, at the south end of DeBaliviere where the gates to the World's Fair had been.  
(25)

Development of the existing subdivisions continued at a furious pace. When Gould's Blue Book for 1910 appeared, an astonishing number of new addresses were listed in

Parkview and Washington Heights--101! Considering the painstaking methods of good-quality construction, we can not only imagine the swarms of workmen everywhere, but can also readily admit the need for the limited number of basic floor plans used. Construction was managed carefully, as the surprising number of large trees still here attest. Some of the trees are from 100 to 150 years old. The question of whether or not each landowner bought the plans and changed them to his family's specifications or whether a single builder was responsible for most of the homes, has not been settled. Many of the records of that day are still in existence but not in order. Individual research by a present-day homeowner would probably yield more information than neighborhood-wide research.

George F. Bergfeld was an important builder on the 6100 block of Kingsbury, but was not responsible for all of the homes there. An example of prices of the time can be seen when looking at three of his houses. These three homes sit beside each other (a common practice in Washington Heights Subdivision development) and all are considered a full three stories today, but are listed on the building permit as two and one-half stories. All have the central stair-case plan, with a large art glass window on the landing, but they look quite different from the outside. These appear to be the most expensive homes on the block at \$7,500 each to build.(57) A side-stairway plan home, only two stories (on the 6100 block of McPherson), with a building price of \$5,000, (57) can today be insured for a replacement value of \$70,000.

The phases of housing development of the present Skinker-DeBaliviere Neighborhood are understandable in light of the real estate transactions we have previously explored. But, perhaps anticipating the character of our present residents, early development went against the prevailing trend to westward movement. The 6200 blocks contained the majority of first homes, followed by the 6300 blocks, with a beginning of homes on the western end of the 6100 blocks. According to the Blue Books, (7) by 1910, Berlin Avenue (now Pershing) had two residences in the 6200 block, four in the 6100 block; Waterman showed eleven in the 6200 block, five in the 6100 block, one in the 6300 block and one in the 6000 block. McPherson Avenue listed 14 homes in the 6000 block, ten in the 6100 block, five in the 6200's and two in the 6300's. Washington Avenue listed 17 families in the 6200 block, 16 in the 6100 block, and 13 in the 6300 block. Westminster Place showed 24 residences in the 6100's, three each in the 6200's and 6300's and two in the 6000 block. Kingsbury Avenue (which does not go into Parkview) had 31 families in the 6100 block and seven in the 6000 block. At the corner of Skinker and McPherson (presumably where the Sinclair station is now) stood the first residence on Skinker Road, number 400.

Who were the people who established the basic character of our neighborhood? Quite a few of them were considered important enough in the life of St. Louis to be listed by The Republic newspaper in its 1906 and 1912 editions of The Book of St. Louisans, "a biographical dictionary of leading living men of the City of St. Louis and vicinity." (3, Title page) Judging merely by surnames, our neighborhood was not only home to comfortably-fixed families of British and French origin, but also perhaps a rung on the ladder being climbed by late-arriving Germans, Irish and Italians. There were clergymen, real estate company presidents, architects, the Assistant Superintendent of Instruction for the

St. Louis Board of Education, physicians, men involved with some aspect of railroad management, lawyers, lumber company and hardware company officials (their homes may have some little extra touches), the paymaster of the Hamilton-Brown Shoe Company, the manager of Fleischmann & Co. (yeast), several men involved in wholesale or retail dry goods, the secretary of the John Deere Plow Company, a few men in the insurance business, some in banking and some in groceries, the president of Smith's Auto Repair Co. at 501 DeBaliviere, two glass company presidents, (8) and a future Missouri Governor.

As the neighborhood continued to grow, a new feature appeared in 1911--apartment buildings. While some of the two-family homes so popular in St. Louis had already been built (NOTE: we have counted each part of a two-family as a residence), none of the "High-Class Apartments" mentioned in Parkview Realty's plans for the area in the 1903 Prospectus had been constructed. There is little doubt that the extensive range of streetcar service in the city's western end, greatly aided by the presence of Washington University and the diversions of Forest Park, made our neighborhood ideal for those whose only source of transportation was the streetcar. Automobiles at that time were for the wealthy and were unreliable enough that people who punched a time clock preferred the streetcars.

The apartment building developed first close to the car lines: in the 5700 blocks near DeBaliviere, along Skinker, Wateman and near Delmar.(7) Even today, we can see where the small clusters of shops developed at each major streetcar transfer point. Apartment dwellers could have spacious quarters, perhaps a block or so away from the car lines which would take them downtown to work or anywhere in the city, and they could do their shopping on the way home. With no need for garages, our planners placed their buildings close together and close to the street, making the apartments large and comfortable. In later days this would mean always overcrowded streets as every family in every apartment tried to find a space to park its car, and very little room for children to play in front.

By 1912, homes had begun to spring up in Washington Heights 1st Addition, along with the apartment buildings, and the 5800 and 5900 blocks listed their first residents.(7) The final area of full development for our neighborhood were the blocks near the Wabash (now Norfolk & Western) Railroad tracks, which then ran at ground level. Once plans had been made to sink the tracks to their present level, nearby construction was rapid.

On July 22, 1915, the plat for Washington Heights 2nd Addition (a smaller part of what we now call Washington Heights) was filed with the Recorder of Deeds(59, Book 19, p.97) by the owner of the land, G. H. Dudley, secretary of the Edward K. Love Realty Company. (8) This 2nd Addition includes only two streets, Kingsbury and Westminster, from DeBaliviere to Laurel. This area, of course, was prime for development because of the activity all around it, and probably made a nice profit for whoever actually held the land until this time.

Any fast-growing neighborhood, such as ours was from 1910 on, finds its new residents spending a few years getting settled, establishing a new pattern of living and shopping, and making appropriate adjustments in their social lives. Once settled, however, residents begin to look outward and the creation of a true neighborhood begins. Parkview Subdivision,

because of the terms of its trusteeship, followed the plan set down by its developers and as early as April 20, 1910, held the first meeting of the Parkview Association at the Mercantile Club downtown, to elect its officers and director. (41)

Another element in this creation of a neighborhood was the development of a local public school. The need for a neighborhood school had become evident as early as 1913. It was so urgent, in fact, that during the 1914-1915 school year, seven frame and two steel portable classroom buildings housed 377 students and nine teachers at the corner of Hamilton and Washington Avenues. This was the beginning of our public elementary school named for Alexander Hamilton. It was the third elementary public school in St. Louis to have this name. The two previous Hamilton school buildings, one at Twenty-fifth and Davies Streets and the other at Twenty-third and Dixon Streets, had both become totally unusable by 1909. (65) In the 1915-1916 school year two more frame portable buildings, one teacher and 100 pupils were added to the new Hamilton School complex. During that same year a contract was let to construct the present 24 classroom building. There were already 772 pupils (81 in Kindergarten) in the 1917-1918 school year. The building was not completed until February 4, 1918, but by the 1918-1919 school year, 27 teachers were serving over 1000 pupils. (55)

The three largest churches in our neighborhood, St. Roch's Catholic Church, Grace Methodist Church and Delmar Baptist Church (all currently supporting members of the Skinker-DeBaliviere Community Council), began serving residents of our area within eight years of each other. The first congregation to actually hold services here was St. Roch's with the celebration of the first Mass in the Skinker-DeBaliviere Neighborhood on September 17, 1911. Contrary to what might be expected, St. Roch's Parish was not established as a result of westward population movement from Cathedral Parish, but eastward movement from St. Ann's Parish in Normandy, Missouri. In the last quarter of the nineteenth century, St. Ann's served the farms of the north county. Eventually enough people settled east of St. Ann's to justify a second church; St. Rose of Lima in the Cabanne District. By 1902, the population south of St. Ann's and west of St. Rose of Lima called for another parish which became All Saints in University City. Since the population of this neighborhood was very sparse until after the World's Fair, St. Rose's and All Saints adequately served the Catholic population of this area.

After the Fair, Washington Heights and Parkview were growing rapidly and their inhabitants thought land for a church should be purchased while choice tracts were still available. Father Long, pastor of All Saints, agreed and in June of 1911, accompanied by a group of laymen, he called on Archbishop Glennon to present their plan for a church. The Archbishop assented and the group promptly purchased a tract of land on the southeast corner of Waterman and Rosedale for \$55.00 a front foot. The Reverend George Kuhlman was appointed first pastor of this "nameless" parish.

The first problem confronting Father Kuhlman was establishing a suitable temporary church. Six parishioners contributed \$100 each to outfit the church and helped Kuhlman find a suitable building. They eventually rented a small store at 6008 installed a temporary altar, a portable organ and folding chairs. This building



the Skinker-DeBaliviere Community Council Office. Father Kuhlman moved into a room in the home of one of his new parishioners until a rectory could be constructed.

Father Kuhlman, an innovative problem solver, devised a plan that would not only provide a name for his new parish, but help raise money for its building fund as well. "He held a competition and after lively bidding in the old Park Theatre, Hamilton and Delmar, St. Roch was chosen patron of the parish. Thus it became one of the few parishes in the city named for a canonized layman." (34, p.4)

A year after his arrival at St. Roch's, Father Kuhlman was able to celebrate Mass in a temporary chapel in the completed school building on Waterman. The structure cost some \$50,000 and included the chapel, four classrooms on the first floor and living quarters for Father Kuhlman. By 1915, the rectory was completed. Seven years later the present church at Waterman and Rosedale was dedicated for services. (34, pp. 1-8)

Grace Methodist Church was the second of these three churches to hold services in our area. Although ground was not broken for the church on the northeast corner of Waterman and Skinker until March 13, 1913, the congregation and even this very church building go back to the nineteenth century. The history of the congregation begins with Union Methodist Episcopal Church, which stood "at Garrison and Lucas Avenues in a location called Piety Hill" (37, p.3) because of the numerous churches in the area. Since many of its members were leaving the old neighborhood to build homes farther west, the Official Board of Union Church appointed a committee to look into the matter of establishing another Methodist church west of Vandeventer Avenue.

At this time Lindell Avenue was quickly becoming one of St. Louis' most fashionable streets, and it was here that the committee chose a site for the new church. The exact location was the southwest corner of Lindell and Newstead, the land being "some lots recently carved from Lindell's farm." (37, p.4) When the new Lindell Avenue Methodist Episcopal Church held its first service in the new chapel in 1892, the membership was about 100 with 80 of these members having transferred from Union Church. Five years later in 1897, the main church was completed and dedicated.

During the next 15 years another shift in population took place, and the congregation decided to again follow the western trend. However, they decided to take their new church with them to the corner of Skinker Road and Waterman Avenue. Mr. Fred C. Bonsack, an active Board Member of Lindell Church was the architect for the removal and rebuilding of the church. The original plans of the church could not be obtained because the architect, Mr. Theodore C. Link, had died. Consequently, hundreds of measurements and innumerable photographs had to be made of the existing church to assist in its re-erection. The auditorium was rebuilt on Skinker just as it stood on Lindell, but a few changes were made in other parts of the church. (37, pp.4, 5, 15)

Former Lieutenant Governor Edwin O. Stanard (first President of the Board of Trustees of Lindell Church), who helped secure outstanding visiting preachers during the World's Fair, made possible the removal and rebuilding of the Lindell Church. He donated the

lot at Skinker and Waterman on condition that the church be moved and rebuilt free of debt. In compliance with this condition, all the money necessary for the moving and rebuilding was subscribed before the work started.(37, p.11)

Since the church was changing location, the congregation voted to change its name to Grace Methodist Episcopal Church. It remained that until "Episcopal" was eliminated when the three branches of Methodism united.(40, p.5)

Ground was broken on March 18, 1913. "As the old edifice was torn down, the new one was erected in the new location, the top stones of the old church becoming the bottom stones of the new church."(37, p.5) First services were held in the rebuilt chapel on September 21, 1913; the church was completed on October 11, 1914. The building is distinguished by its beautiful art glass windows. The Niedringhaus Memorial Window is one of the few Tiffany windows in St. Louis.(37, p.22) Another unique feature of the building is that a brick from the Great Wall of China is built into the west wall of the auditorium. The brick was a gift from Mr. and Mrs. Hanford Crawford, active church members, who brought it back from Nankow Pass in 1913.(37, pp.33-34)

Delmar Baptist Church was the last of the three churches to locate in our neighborhood, but is the oldest of the three congregations, dating back to 1877. Like Grace Methodist congregation, Delmar Baptist's roots lie around "Piety Hill." On Garrison Avenue between Lucas Avenue and Morgan Street, 37 Baptists met and organized the Garrison Avenue Baptist Church. The congregation constructed a small chapel, and Dr. W. Pope Yeaman became its first pastor.

Two years later the congregation was notified that it must remove its chapel from the leased land it occupied. The decision was made to move the chapel rather than destroy it. The church was put on wheels and started its two-week journey two blocks west to Compton and Morgan. One Sunday with the building still on its wheels, five feet above ground level and right in the middle of the street, members trudged through snow to hold services as usual in their chapel. The next day's newspaper dubbed the church "The Church on Wheels".

Although the church building was never again actually "on wheels", the congregation did move several times before establishing itself at Skinker and Washington. The first move came in the early 1880's. In planning this move, officials first chose the corner of Grand Avenue and Washington as a new site, but this changed when a liberal contributor offered a substantial donation if the church would locate at Delmar and Spring. In 1884, the congregation moved into their new quarters and changed their name to The Delmar Avenue Baptist Church.

Within a few months Third Baptist Church moved to its new location at Grand and Washington. This precipitated a crisis for Delmar Church. Two Baptist churches were now within two blocks of each other, and Delmar Church was a much smaller congregation. Just two years after Delmar Church opened, representatives of Baptist churches in the city met and decided to disband Delmar. However, Delmar refused to be disbanded.

The problem of where to go and how to move without money was solved with a generous contribution toward a new location if the church would act immediately. A lot was purchased at Delmar and Pendleton Avenues, and first services were held in 1892.

After 23 years at this location, the decision was made to "move west" again. The church building was sold to the First Christian Church, and a lot was purchased at Skinker and Washington in 1916. World War I interfered with construction plans, and the new building was not completed for three years. At first the congregation used a gymnasium on the third floor of Lenox Hall, a girl's school at Washington and Trinity Avenues. Then they temporarily joined with Immanuel Baptist Church at 5850 Cates. Finally they rented the auditorium of the Clendenen Dancing School in Arcade Hall near Belt and Vernon Avenues. Construction of the present Delmar Baptist Church was begun in 1918 and completed in June of 1919. The "Church on Wheels" had found a place to rest. (33, pp.4-12)

## THE NEIGHBORHOOD MATURES

Until 1920 the events which shaped our history were recorded in public documents or private papers. As the neighborhood has matured, the pertinent facts have not as yet gone into the public record. Events subsequent to 1920 are recorded mostly in human memories and personal papers. It is from 1920 to 1960 that we would most like friends and neighbors to help us fill in the many gaps we found in years so closely past.

The Skinker-DeBaliviere Neighborhood seems to have prospered with the rest of the United States during the "Roaring Twenties". From all reports it has apparently always been considered a great place to grow up, with plenty of friendly homes and small shops, open ground in Forest Park and at Washington University. Judge Daniel B. Tammamny and his family moved into the 6100 block of McPherson in September, 1918. Along with his adventures on the banks of the River Des Peres, he recalls that there were not as many children living here as there are now, and that he and his friends could play marbles in the middle of the street for an hour or more without a car passing by to disturb them.

William L. Rose moved into the 6100 block of Kingsbury in 1910, his parents being the original owners of their house. Mr. Rose lived there until the mid-1960s. He states he did not pay much attention to what was going on in the neighborhood until he was older, in the 1920s. He recalls that most of the residents were business or professional men and that almost everyone had a cook and/or a maid. Many people had automobiles, but many also used the streetcars. The neighborhood was considered to be very far out from downtown St. Louis.

Catherine Baier, who lived in Maplewood at the time, recalls this as the area where wealthy people lived. Judge Tammamny says some people had daily household help, but he can recall no one who had help living in. There was a private night watchman for the (now) Rosedale-Skinker area.

The neighborhood seems to have been alive with small neighborhood businesses. For example, at the southwest corner of Kingsbury and Des Peres there was a fruit and produce stand. Next to it, where the Skinker-DeBaliviere Community Council office is now located, there was a grocery store where Judge Tammamny worked as a clerk when he was a teenager. Jacob Mauer was the meat man and Martin Gorman was the grocer. Next to the grocery store was Bill Schottgen's Bakery, where The People's Clinic is now located.

Josephine Bureau had a building constructed in the 6100 block of Delmar in 1923, to house her Parisian Laundry. Mrs. Bureau and the laundry are still there, specializing in "fancy work"--pleated lingerie and dresses; fine linens, curtains and blankets. Another business that Richard C. Hart says has been "forever" on the south side of the 5900 block of Delmar is Chester's Pipe Shop. It has a walk-in humidor where cigars and tobacco are kept in top condition. A few blocks farther east on Delmar, at DeBaliviere, was Moll's Grocery Store, "the" place for people from all over the West End to shop and distinguished by its large clock standing at the curb in front of the store. After Moll's, this became

Bickle-Moll's grocery store until the building was torn down in the late 1960s.

Garavelli's famous restaurant, still located on the corner of DeGiverville and De-Baliviere (now owned by Byron Tompras), was one of the first restaurants in town to have curb service. You could park your car on either side of DeGiverville, and a waiter would come out, take your order and bring it to your car when it was ready.(52)

There was a Kroger store on the south side of the 6100 block of Pershing near Des Peres. Judge Tammany walked in there on a Saturday afternoon in 1927, and the proprietor exclaimed, "Lindy made it!"

The above local businesses are just a few of those mentioned by Dick Hart and Judge Tammany. The point is that the residents of Skinker-DeBaliviere did not have very far to go to obtain most of the necessary services.

During the Depression of the 1930s, our neighborhood again seemed to follow the pattern of most of the rest of the country. A three-story house in good shape was sold for only \$3,500. Dorr and Zeller moved out in the 1930s. It was located at the northwest corner of Waterman and DeBaliviere (now the site of the Technical Education Corporation), and was famed throughout the city for its ice cream, bakery goods and catering service.

One story that all the people we talked to recall is that of The Gardenia. The Gardenia was a flower shop (a frame building with no basement) which would be right in the center of what is now the intersection of Forest Park Parkway and Skinker. It was very popular with local boys for corsages because it was handy and the prices were reasonable. When, after legal battles, the building was torn down to widen the street, it was learned that the proprietor was really a "squatter" and had never owned the property on which he had built his business.(42)

The 1940s brought World War II, and Judge Tammany and Dick Hart recall that during the war the apartments in the neighborhood were mainly owner occupied and well maintained. It was after the war, in the late 1940s and early 1950s, that the owners began to move from their buildings. Apartments were subdivided (quietly!) because of the housing shortage and rent ceilings.

Judge Tammany was first elected Magistrate Judge in 1950. He remembers our neighborhood as always politically active as well as being the home of political leaders. In 1940, the candidates for governor were Lawrence McDaniel, Democrat, and Forest Donnell, Republican. Mr. McDaniel lived on the south side of the 5900 block of Waterman, and Mr. Donnell lived in St. Louis County. Both were members and leading laymen at Grace Methodist Church. The present alderman of the 28th Ward, John G. Roach, and Steve Vossmeier, State Representative, 86th District, now reside in our neighborhood, as do Judge Carl Gaertner and election commissioners of the City of St. Louis James S. McClellan and Wayne Millsap. Our neighborhood has always been in the 28th Ward. Judge Tammany commented that in the 1940s and 1950s the Republicans almost always carried the ward in city elections and the Democrats almost always carried the ward in national elections.

As we moved into the Fifties, the quality of neighborhood life seemed fairly consistent with that of preceding decades. The neighborhood was still characterized by residents as a "good place to raise a family". It was convenient to the principal shopping and commercial center--downtown St. Louis. Neighborhood stores provided residents with a variety of services. There were several drugstores, groceries, a bakery, cleaners, hardware stores and even an open-air fruit and vegetable market next to the present A & P (Tony Sansone's). A pet store, Mrs. Turner's Flower Shop and a sporting goods store offered some of the "extras" residents might desire. As for entertainment, residents were surrounded by choices. Restaurants provided food to fit almost any desire, from a Parkmoor hamburger to a pizza at Sorrento's to roast beef at Garavelli's. There were several convenient movie theaters. Neighborhood taverns offered places to get together with friends over a beer, and several night clubs flourished. The Winter Garden provided an indoor skating rink. An afternoon of bicycling in Forest Park began at a bike rental store next to the present International Market on DeBaliviere.

Along with this consistency there was one obvious change. Our neighborhood was in the midst of a "population boom". With the war over, college enrollments rose. The convenience of the area to both Washington University and St. Louis University attracted many new residents, some of whom were students and some faculty members. As the Fifties progressed, a building boom in the county eased the post-war housing shortage and continued a trend of "westward movement" that had been interrupted by the World Wars. As we have seen throughout this history (which necessarily involves the history of the larger metropolitan area), the trend in St. Louis population movement has been westward. We saw how Daniel Catlin at the age of 79 was "moving on" from Vandeventer Place to Westmoreland Place. The stories of both Grace Methodist and Delmar Baptist congregations are classic examples of this movement. Added to this historic "westward population shift" in the Fifties, there was a very real reason for moving west. Urban decay had taken its toll in areas east of Grand Avenue. Large areas such as the Mill Creek Valley were declared blighted. With the buildings scheduled for demolition, residents had to move.

It is probably the less obvious factors connected with our population boom and the renewed westward movement that were most important to what happened in the neighborhood later. During the years of housing shortages many owners of rental property occupied one of the dwelling units of their own buildings. As the housing supply increased, it was often the owners of rental property who made the move to the new houses beyond the city limits. Thus many buildings lost the supervision of an owner who was close at hand. Another result of the population boom was that it kept the demand for housing in our area high in the Fifties. Consequently, the emergency housing measures taken after the war continued to operate. The small apartments that had been carved out of the larger ones could still be rented, as could the "rooms to let" in the private homes. As the Fifties drew to a close, some rental buildings were beginning to show the strain of a decade of over-occupancy. A change in the concept of a "desirable location" went hand-in-hand with the western movement to the suburbs in the Fifties. Not only home buyers, but also commercial establishments looked to the suburbs as a place to move. For the most part, real estate people readily promoted this idea. For support of their position, they pointed to the advance of urban decay along Page Boulevard toward the Cabanne District adjoining our northern

border. With the rental properties in our neighborhood already strained by overcrowding, they decided urban decay would be inevitable here.

In the late Fifties some residents of the neighborhood realized that the problems of our area had to be tackled. At this time two neighborhood organizations developed. Washington Heights Neighbors' first murmurings in the fall of 1957 were over a backyard fence between several neighbors. (43) The murmurings soon developed into a letter sent to neighbors on January 2, 1958 which set forth the reasons why an improvement organization was needed:

Dear Neighbor:

Perhaps you, too, like some of your neighbors have been talking about our neighborhood. We have come to the conclusion that ours is basically a good neighborhood, and that we want to keep it that way.

We believe that the only way for us to prevent blight in our neighborhood is for us to act together. . . (45)

One month later the Washington Heights Neighbors (made up of residents in the area bounded by Delmar Boulevard, Pershing, Des Peres and DeBaliviere Avenues, the Washington Heights 1st Addition and 2nd Addition subdivisions discussed above) was formally organized and moved against housing code violations. Legislation by the Rooming House Association was about to be pushed through the Board of Aldermen, and Washington Heights Neighbors joined with a city-wide organization of neighborhood associations to work against the bill. The neighborhood associations showed overwhelming strength; despite zero weather, the attendance at the hearing for the bill was so large that it had to be moved to Kiel Opera House. The proposal was soundly defeated. (45)

Washington Heights Neighbors concentrated on four other areas of neighborhood concern: Police Action, Traffic, Recreation and Education, and Sanitation. The beautification efforts of the association made news in 1961. Working in cooperation with the Washington Heights Garden Club and the St. Louis Parks Department, residents landscaped three plots of ground: "A triangular area at the intersection of Waterman Boulevard, DeGiverville Avenue and Laurel Street, and two circular tracts at Nina Place and Waterman and Nina Place and McPherson Avenue." (22) Washington Heights Neighbors initiated the practice of an annual house tour and again received publicity; their 1963 tour featured ten homes east of Des Peres. (23)

West of Des Peres Avenue, residents of the 6100 blocks of Washington through Pershing also felt the need to organize. Concerned primarily with the continued existence of full-scale rooming houses and numerous single-room rentals in private homes, these residents formed the Rosedale-Skinker Improvement Association. Annoyed by housing code violations, association members began a campaign of finding out where rooms were being rented illegally. Although their tactics, keeping track of who went in and out and even a record of license numbers, were often referred to as "snooping", the residents persisted and were successful.

From their interest in this one housing code violation, the association members moved against other housing code violations and then toward improvements such as alley lights as well as barriers to slow and reduce the flow of traffic on their streets.(49)

Although there were some urban problems evident in our neighborhood during the Fifties, Dorothy Hogan, who was in grade school and began high school during this time, remembers this as a good place to grow up. It was a very "close-knit" neighborhood from Parkview to DeBaliviere. With a large number of friends available, drugstores, Forest Park, and movie theaters within walking distance, the Skinker-DeBaliviere Neighborhood was a great place for a teenager to live.

As the Sixties dawned, our increased neighborhood population needed more community services. Both the public school and the Catholic school entered the decade under the strain of increased enrollment. In 1961 Hamilton School added two steel portable units and then in April, 1963, opened the eight-classroom Hamilton Branch I.(65) That same year, St. Roch's Church broke ground for its school annex which contained six classrooms, a large gymnasium, faculty rooms, a school office and increased library space.(34, p.19) The St. Louis Public Library opened the Des Peres Branch October 15, 1963, in response to citizen urging, with an initial book collection of about 5,000.(44)

In the mid-Sixties, the self-serving predictions of the real estate companies ten years before appeared to be coming true. The "strained" buildings were in much worse condition than they had been ten years earlier. It seemed to some that the Skinker-DeBaliviere area was a "changing neighborhood" with all the negative connotations of that phrase and its prediction of ultimate doom. The neighborhood did change. Some people moved out, but the change became a revitalization. The remaining residents and the new residents believed it possible for diversified groups to live together. They believed that urban problems could be combated. They believed, as had residents throughout the decades, that the Skinker-DeBaliviere Neighborhood was a good place to live and raise a family.

From the late Sixties to the present, stronger and more cooperative neighborhood feeling has grown up. This is evidenced by the birth of a number of neighborhood organizations and events. In the latter months of 1965, it became clear to many residents that their efforts would have more impact if they formed an area-wide umbrella organization with a budget so that a small full-time staff could be employed. It was felt that such a staff could concentrate the necessary effort in mobilizing the area resources that are so important for the welfare of the community.

The Skinker-DeBaliviere Community Council was formed in March 1966, as a joint effort by the following:

The Rosedale-Skinker Improvement Association  
Washington Heights Neighbors  
St. Roch's Church  
Grace Methodist Church  
Delmar Baptist Church  
Washington University



The Parkview Agents became a supportive member of the Council in the fall of 1968. James L'Ecuier was employed as the first Director of the Council, a position he admirably filled until late 1970. The new staff and the Board of the Council quickly turned their attention to those issues of the area that was by then designated by boundaries of Forest Park on the south, Parkview on the west, Delmar Boulevard on the north and DeBaliviere Avenue on the east. The first office of the Council was located in the 5800 block of Delmar. Later the office was moved to two locations at 425 DeBaliviere. The first site was a second floor office and later, to gain more space, the Council moved its office downstairs into a commercial space that had been used by a drug store. A fire totally destroyed the building and the Council then moved to 404 DeBaliviere.(61)

In 1967 Susan M. Roach, a new resident to the area, organized the first neighborhood Art Fair, using St. Roch's parking lot to display the paintings. That year there were 36 entrants contacted by leaflets left at art supply stores. Entrance fees were used to pay a judge and to award three \$25.00 prizes. The next year an older custom, a neighborhood house tour, was revived by Joanne Budde in conjunction with the Art Fair. The location of the Art Fair was moved to the 6100 block of Kingsbury Avenue, and the number of entrants grew. By this time the neighborhood had the assistance of several resident artists who could either serve as judges or recruit fellow artists to volunteer as judges. From that point on, the Art Fair-House Tour has supported itself, using the profits of one year to defray costs for the next year. On Mother's Day every year, many hundreds of people from all over the metropolitan area come to our neighborhood to participate in this event. (67)

Thomas W. Flynn, age 20, who moved here at the beginning of the Sixties, has fond memories of growing up in our neighborhood during that decade. He remembers some of his schoolmates moving away, but there were always "a lot of kids" so there was never a lack of friends. Everyone on the block knew each other, and they especially liked outdoor games. He and his friends played Johnny Cross or British Bulldog every night after school. With longer daylight hours during the summer, early evenings were fine for kick-the-can although "neighbors yelled" if the players ran across lawns. For indoor fun there were classes at Jefferson Memorial and Saturday matinees at the Tivoli (now the "Magic Lantern").

As our neighborhood entered the Seventies, cooperation among the various organizations was so effective that Ralston Purina was convinced by residents that it would be detrimental to our neighborhood to have a "Jack-in-the-Box" restaurant located at Skinker and Delmar. The action taken against this large corporation indicated the determination of residents to exercise some control over the fate of the neighborhood.

The establishment of the Residential Service in the spring of 1970 is further evidence of this determination. Realizing that our neighborhood was not being properly represented by real estate companies, Susan Roach and Patricia Kohn organized the Residential Service. This is an entirely volunteer organization. It was originally established with six functioning divisions: promotion; block-unit real estate coordination (which sought to make block residents interested in real estate transactions on their own block); research and records

(directed at identifying owners of property and avoiding straw party sales); available property records and research (which kept record of all rental and saleable property in the neighborhood); code violations (which involved a system of reporting and follow-up on code violations); beautification and sanitation (which aimed at improving the appearance of the neighborhood).(46, 68)

In the first year of its organization, the Residential Service found that an overwhelming amount of time was necessary to keep accurate records of available rental and for-sale property. The decision was made to concentrate efforts on property for sale. Several members volunteered to take over this task and became in effect a "not-for-profit real estate service". They kept accurate records on what was for sale and showed the houses to prospective buyers. The 1972 statistics show that the Residential Service was responsible for the sale of 22 homes in the preceding year. It is primarily "word-of-mouth" advertising which has been so successful.(54)

Although the other goals of the Residential Service have been preceded in importance by the sale of property, the Service did sponsor a neighborhood beautification project--the construction of a Tot Lot on vacant ground at the northwest corner of Pershing and Des Peres Avenues. With the design help of a group of Washington University architectural students known as Street Revival, donation of materials from local businesses and the energies of neighbors, the Tot Lot was constructed in the spring of 1971.

As the various parts of the neighborhood worked in closer cooperation, a need arose for a more comprehensive means of communication than the telephone or meetings. Thirty interested residents met in April of 1970 to organize a community newspaper. The Paper, as it is titled, is published approximately ten times a year. Editors and reporters are strictly volunteers. Although advertising is solicited, The Paper has not been entirely self-supporting. It is subsidized by money from the Skinker-DeBaliviere Community Council, The Parkview Association and occasional individual donations.(63)

In 1970, both the Skinker-DeBaliviere Community Council and Des Peres Branch Library moved to new quarters. In November 1970, in order to be more centrally located in the area it served, the Council office was moved to its present location at 6008 Kingsbury Avenue. In that same year there was a major change in the structure of the Council Board. To broaden the area representation on the Board, it was expanded by ten members who are elected from designated sections of the community. Presently, sixteen of the eighteen members of the Board are residents of the neighborhood. In January 1971, Calvin B. Stuart, Jr. became Director of the Council.

The Skinker-DeBaliviere Community Council continues to serve as an umbrella organization working closely with the residents and institutions of the area. The Council holds area-wide issues as its priority with a present emphasis on housing. The volunteer efforts of neighborhood residents are major factors in maintaining both neighborhood stability and growth. With this volunteer and institutional support, the Board of the Council is able to work towards meeting and solving those area issues that must be met to insure the diversity and quality of urban living that is so well represented in the Skinker-DeBaliviere

## Neighborhood.(61)

The library was moved to the southeast corner of Des Peres and Kingsbury in 1970 to be housed in what was previously the Kingsbury Market. Added space was utilized to greatly expand the book collection, more than 20,000 books at present. The library circulates about 35,000 books per year or about five and one-half books per resident. With the move there was an expansion of services. Library users can borrow framed art prints, posters, records, magazines, newspapers as well as current best sellers. Special programs (magic, puppet and animal shows, plays, story hours, vacation reading club for school children) became regular features.(44)

In June of 1972 still another service grew up in response to the needs of the residents of our area and that immediately west of us. The Loop West End People's Clinic is located at 6010 Kingsbury. The clinic grew out of the interest and work of two groups--the Medical Committee for Human Rights and Community Collectives. The first of these is a national organization of people in the medical field. Community Collectives is a group of west area residents who organized to provide community services such as a food co-op. The clinic is entirely financed by donations, initially from interested contributors and now from patients as well. It is staffed by volunteers who are doctors taking their residencies at Barnes and Firmin Desloge hospitals and one physician who is in private practice. Volunteers from the neighborhood do the clerical work. The clinic cares for approximately 250 to 300 patients a month.(69)

Probably the most important development of the late Sixties and early Seventies was the return to neighborhood ownership of rental properties. Not only did many residents of the area begin buying local properties to revitalize, but outside funds also became available for use under the supervision of neighborhood groups through the efforts of both a private organization and the Skinker-DeBaliviere Community Council.

One private organization began such a movement here in 1970. West End Townhouse, Inc. was formed in the latter part of that year as a subsidiary of Continental Telephone Company. Philip Lucier, president of Continental Telephone, was primarily responsible for the formation of West End Townhouse. Based on the premise that existing urban neighborhoods can survive and grow if there is significant new outside investment, West End Townhouse initiated its program of renewing and maintaining rental property in this area.

After Mr. Lucier was killed, the West End Townhouse corporation was turned over in trusteeship to the people of St. Roch's parish. It is now managed through a Board of Directors and trustees, and is responsible for the operation of approximately 126 dwelling units in the neighborhood. Recently Washington University and the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of St. Louis pledged to guarantee mortgage loans of the corporation in the amounts of \$200,000 and \$100,000, respectively.(51, 66)

The Skinker-DeBaliviere Community Council also felt the need to move against the abandonment and dereliction which had occurred in buildings in a portion of our neighborhood. Although the area is not large, it was felt that the deterioration was a threat to the

rest of the neighborhood. As a result, it was proposed that the highly blighted area be designated for redevelopment. The proposed designation was discussed at many area meetings and once it had been determined that there was a favorable consensus, an ordinance was approved by the Board of Aldermen designating several areas of the city, including that in the Skinker-DeBaliviere Neighborhood, as available for redevelopment.

The Board of the Skinker-DeBaliviere Community Council, Inc., chose to sponsor and design a redevelopment plan for the area in its neighborhood. With the aid of the Washington University School of Urban Design and a planning group, Team Four, Inc., a thorough plan was submitted to and approved by the Board of Aldermen. Primarily, the approval of the plan meant the naming of the Kingsbury Redevelopment Corporation as redeveloper of the area.

The Kingsbury Redevelopment Corporation is presently solely owned by the Skinker-DeBaliviere Community Council, Inc. Its purpose is to plan, develop and finance approximately 200 units of new housing of the town house style, for mixed incomes. Eventually the Kingsbury Redevelopment Corporation may maintain ownership and management, but this is subject to change according to the necessities of the availability of financing sources.

The process of developing the program has been tedious and slow. This has much to do with the usual difficulties of residential development, the difficulties of not-for-profit sponsorships, and a recent slow-down and freeze of federally-insured housing through the Department of Housing and Urban Development. The necessary funds for early planning have been raised and the program will soon be submitted to the appropriate groups for funding and insurance.

Although the program has been the cause of some controversy in the area, it is generally felt to be an important factor in the continuing growth of the neighborhood. It is difficult to be absolutely sure of the outcome, but there is a sense that the effort of many people has been worthwhile and well expended.(61)

Even though adult residents have brought about these new organizations and events within our neighborhood, perhaps the best summary of neighborhood feeling can be found in the words of a current six-year-old resident: "One thing about our neighborhood is there are lots of friends here and lots of kids. I like the big houses--they look pretty and neat, and there are lotsa places to hide."

## THE FUTURE

We see the future of the Skinker-DeBaliviere Neighborhood to be a healthy one for many reasons. The housing stock is a very important reason for optimism. Our neighborhood is fortunate to have a diversified supply of residences from efficiency units to large gracious homes. Consequently, housing needs from those of an individual to those of a large family can be satisfied in our neighborhood. The construction of the buildings is such that, as mentioned earlier, the same quality of home would cost at least five times the current market value to replace, and probably could not be duplicated due to the unavailability of craftsmen and the extreme expense of fine materials. Prices of neighborhood property have been going up, but our quality homes are still a bargain. These assets of our housing stock are reflected in the statistics (of houses for sale) kept by the Residential Service. The demand for homes in our neighborhood has risen steadily. Currently, although there are only eight houses for sale, there are 22 families who are looking for homes in the neighborhood. (64)

The schools are another reason to be optimistic about the future of our neighborhood. For years St. Roch's Catholic Church has looked beyond its own members. Seeing the overcrowding in the public school, St. Roch's has admirably filled a need in our community. Not only has their school operated with a policy of open enrollment, but has also been responsive to parent suggestion.

Realizing that a neighborhood school is vital to the future of a neighborhood, residents of the Skinker-DeBaliviere Neighborhood urged that some solution must be found for the overcrowding at Hamilton Public School. From this, the Hamilton District Reference Committee was organized by action of the Superintendent of Schools, Clyde Miller. It consists of representatives from the Board of Education, the Skinker-DeBaliviere Community Council, public school administrators and teachers, parents and at-large members. On April 4, 1973, a proposed plan for the 1973-74 school year was presented at the committee's initial meeting by Charles Brasfield, Superintendent of the Northwest-Soldan District. In telephone conversations with Samuel Gregory, Assistant Superintendent of the Northwest-Soldan District and Calvin B. Stuart, Jr., we learned that the plan calls for a "new" public school which will operate in the present Hamilton Branch Three building, for grades Kindergarten through fourth. It will eliminate the current bussing to Wheatley and Mitchell schools. This will involve a redistricting with some of Hamilton's school population changed to surrounding elementary schools; however, all students from our neighborhood would be in the Hamilton District. Teachers have been informed of the proposed plan, and the Board of Education has approved it. In the next few weeks, there will be several meetings to discuss the plan with as many residents as possible. So we see our neighborhood in the future served both by a quality private school and a desirable public school which together will make the area more attractive for families with children.

We believe that there will be a growth and redevelopment of commercial facilities to enhance the neighborhood's future. The continued existence of such "neighborhood institutions" as Garavelli's (owned by Byron Tompras) and Barry Leader Drugs (owned by

Sidney A. Goldberg) are examples of the stable clientele our neighborhood offers to merchants. The plans of the Kingsbury Redevelopment Corporation reflect this neighborhood asset in designating a portion of the redevelopment area for commercial use. Immediately to our west, the Loop Area of University City has come back to life to meet the commercial and entertainment needs of its residents. With continued resident pressure, commercial establishments cannot practically ignore the fertile market in our neighborhood.

In the future as in the past, the Skinker-DeBaliviere Neighborhood will have a desirable location in relation to the entire metropolitan St. Louis area. There is easy access to all major interstate highways and the Inner and Outer Belts. If rapid transit is ever developed in St. Louis, there is reason to believe it will be in close proximity to our neighborhood. We are only 12 minutes from downtown Broadway and seven minutes from the Clayton shopping district. We are convenient to either an Illinois airport or an expanded Lambert-St. Louis International Airport.

As for the negative aspects of city living, people are beginning to realize that urban problems do not stop at the St. Louis City Limits. Blight and crime have moved westward with the population. Statistics for the last year show that the crime rate in the city in general and our neighborhood in particular is decreasing. The "crowding" of the city is also lessening in our neighborhood. Our residents' insistence on strict housing code enforcement has forced occupancy rates to go down, and the redevelopment plans will lessen the density in that area.

The most important reason for our prediction of a healthy future for the neighborhood is the people who live here. They are working together for this future, and it is the people living here who make Skinker-DeBaliviere not just an area, but a NEIGHBORHOOD.

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